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ABSTRACT

This collection of articles is assembled from a variety of sources and contributors that together form a statewide network of volunteer programs teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to refugees. The articles are divided into the following sections: (1) teaching tips; (2) "talk time" (concerning a weekly conversation session); (3) discussions of tutors' classroom experiences; and (4) personal narratives of students. The first section, on teaching tips, contains brief expository articles and descriptions of classroom techniques under the following headings (1) using the Total Physical Response method; (2) focusing on listening, speaking, and thinking; (3) implementing literacy activities; and (4) using games and projects. The second section contains seven articles describing variations on a conversational activity in which volunteers and language learners meet informally. Tutors' narratives of teaching activities and experiences with students are presented in the third section, and in the fourth section, personal learning and acculturation experiences are presented from the student's perspective. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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PARTNERS IN LEARNING

Selected Articles from the First Five Years of the VOLUNTEER VOICE

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Acknowledgements

The experience of the ESL classroom or tutoring session is an organic process: one can never predict what exciting things may happen as teacher and student (each bringing her unique experience, knowledge and expectations) interact and learn together. The Volunteer Voice is a bit like that, too. The assembled articles come from a variety of sources - other newsletters and magazines, ESL texts; teaching ideas gleaned from conferences, colleagues and tutors around the state and beyond; stories from tutors and students; observations and personal experience. It is our hope that these offerings can now become a helpful part of your teaching process. Although the names of current and former Volunteer Training Project staff are listed below as major contributors, we eagerly acknowledge that our contributions are possible only because we have learned so much from students, volunteer tutors, program coordinators and professional teachers who have generously shared their experiences with us. In the field of ESL, many seeds bear fruit for harvest!

In the assembling of this volume, we especially thank Chieu Tran and Patrice Carpenter who typed the manuscript so beautifully and cheerfully, our coordinator Marilyn Bentson who did all the laborious paste-up work to ready the book for the printer, and Peter Skaer who edited Volunteer Voice over most of its first five years.

We dedicate this book to all the volunteer tutors in Washington State and their students, who together are partners in learning.

Anita Bell
Marilyn Bentson
Chris Gilman
Matt Laszewski
Peter Skaer
Michael Tate
Lucinda Wingard

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TEACHING TIPS

TPR and Beyond

TPR with Low-level Students

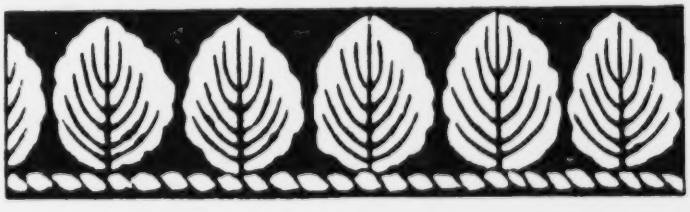
Candy Carbone of TCH has been teaching a group of older, pre-literate students by using TPR (total physical response--see your HANDBOOK for a review of TPR). She's found it's a great way to introduce vocabulary, develop listening skills and confidence, and just generally teach English.

She began simply with a few verbs (show me, point to, touch, pick up) and nouns (pan, ten, cup, table). These can be used as building blocks, supporting an increasing structure of more nouns and verbs, plus adjectives and prepositions (e.g., pick up the small can, throw the big box, put the pen on the table). Once the group was familiar with some basic nouns and verbs, Candy taught a few colors by using children's blocks: pick up the red block, give the blue one to Leng. She also introduced action verbs - sit down, walk to the door, run to the wall (don't forget to include some fun verbs as well: clap, whistle, wink and scratch).

Halfway through the 2 hour class, the group stands up for exercise. This serves as a waker-upper and a review of body parts and right and left: touch your toes, raise your right hand, touch your left knee with your right elbow.

Candy reports that when she introduced the verbs laugh and cry, students were at first reluctant to act out these verbs. But she found that giving ludicrous commands (clap your feet, put your nose on the floor) elicited real-live laughter that loosened up the group. And by sobbing melodramatically herself at the command cry, she first got only astounded stares from the students but gradually everyone joined in. It was a good tension reliever and paved the way for acting out other emotions and introducing, eventually, the idea of role-playing in the class.

TPR? Try it, you'll like it.



TPR Map

Joan Jones, an ESL teacher at Missoula Voc Tech, has found an ingenious way to bring a community right into her classroom. Her entry-level students can become acquainted with getting around town, following directions and eventually giving directions.

Joan creates a 3-D map. She changes small boxes and milk cartons into buildings by lining them up to form blocks and streets. Each building is identified by an item which indicates what kind of business it is. For example, an aspirin bottle sits inside the drugstore, a dollar bill decorates the bank, and a spoon identifies the restaurant.

Joan uses total physical response techniques (TPR) to take her students on tours of their mini-city: "Go straight three blocks, then turn left...Go buy some oranges...." She can also use this technique to have her students set the city up: "Put the bank next to the post office. Put the restaurant across the street from the drug store..."

Eventually they work up to discussions: "I'm getting my hair cut. Where am I?" "You need to cash a check. Where do you go?" "You work here. What do you do?" "Tell me how to go from the bank to the supermarket."

The possibilities seem endless. But a good way to get started might involve just a few cartons for one side of a street. Masking tape on the floor can outline the street and sidewalk.

Pre-literate Bluejeans

One of the morning teachers at TCH, Sharilyn Anderson, has a talent for getting a lot of mileage out of TPR and a few simple props. In a single lesson she will use TPR to focus the concentration of the class and get the blood flowing before getting down to business. Then she will use TPR again to review, to introduce new material, and to practice this material in ways that hold student interest long enough for lessons to sink in.

First, as the class of pre-literate students wanders in, still sleepy and not entirely focused, talking to each other in Khmer, she smiles benignly and waits until time to start. Then she calls all the students into the center of the room, into a circle close around her and begins her daily warm-up: "Everyone stand up! Stretch! Lean forward! Touch your left shoulder, touch your right shoulder! Touch your nose! Touch your toes! Turn around! Thank you. Please sit down."

This rapid warm-up gets everyone focused on the lesson to come. It allows her to stimulate the class, to review body parts or directions, or classroom vocabulary as she feels it is needed. It also provides reassurance for some of the students because the beginning TPR sequence has become a classroom routine, something the students understand and expect at the beginning of the lesson.

Once the students are sitting down again, Sharilyn begins the lesson. On one occasion when the topic was clothing, she began by pulling a pair of jeans from a bulging shopping bag she had hauled into class. "What are these?" "Jeans," said the students. She tossed the jeans across the circle and began issuing instructions: "Catch the jeans. Give the jeans to him. Throw the jeans to her. Give the jeans to me!" In this way everyone was able to handle the jeans and get the feel of them, while reviewing the vocabulary of pass, throw, him, her, etc.

Now it was time for some new vocabulary; Sharilyn showed them the hem, the zipper, the pocket, the seat, and the knee of the jeans. These terms were reinforced with some questions and answers and some more TPR. Now more pairs of jeans came out of the bag and soon each student had one. "Show me the knee! She me the seat. Where is the zipper? Turn the jeans inside out! Turn them rightside out. Where is the hem?"

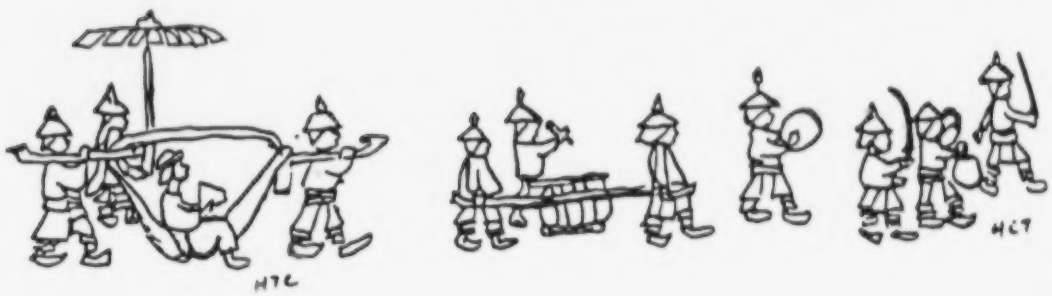
Next they progressed to a discussion of the quality of the jeans--some of the jeans she had given out had holes in the knee or rips in various parts. She asked students to hold up their jeans and then asked them, "Are they good jeans?" Students, with help of their class, had to tell what was wrong with their jeans: "They are not good. They have a hole in the knee."

Some students were unclear about the vocabulary of "hole", and "tear", and "rip", so she sacrificed one pair of jeans, ripping them in front of the class, saying, "I am ripping the jeans." Then she threw them to a student and gave commands: "Tear the jeans! Tear them more! Really tear them!"

Next they discussed ways to mend the jeans--a plan that would call on their ability to measure and sew, which particularly involved the women in the class. On still another day they read the labels on the inside of the jeans, and discussed sizes for children and adults; and in another class, they worked with opposites--wet and dry, by using TPR and commanding the students, "Give her the wet jeans. Touch the wet jeans. Touch the dry jeans. (etc.)"

In the end the students were all given a pair of jeans suitable for either themselves or their family members and allowed to take them home. That's a lot of lessons, and a lot of use from a pair of jeans.

CHRIS GILMAN
Tacoma Community House



Do Something!

To stimulate conversation, expand vocabulary and generally have a good time during a tutoring session, try planning a lesson or two around an activity. Ask your student to demonstrate something she does - cooking, other domestic tasks, creating something, whatever. You may need to suggest an activity at first - it may be as simple as changing the light bulb and batteries in a flashlight - but once the student gets the idea, she'll come up with ideas for further projects.

If she has the language for it, have her tell what she's doing as she does it. If you have two students, have the observing student describe what the demonstrating student is doing. If the students don't have the language needed, you can tell what she's doing - in simple language - as she does it. Also jot down important new vocabulary words on 3 X 5 cards as they come up. Use these for literacy activities later.

On a subsequent day, you try doing what your student demonstrated. This is a chance for the student to review the language as she gives you directions, and also for her to enjoy correcting you.

Possible projects are: making salad rolls or other raw or simply-cooked food, sewing on a button, cutting out a pattern, using an audio or video cassette, putting film in a camera, cleaning the stove, flying a kite, changing an air filter on car, folding origami, acting out some farming activity or other work you student did previously.

ANITA BELL
Tacoma Community House

Listening, Speaking and Thinking

20 Questions

A great way to get your students to participate in this game was demonstrated on tape at TESOL. The teacher taped his mouth closed with masking tape and then wrote on the blackboard, "I can't speak," "Yes = △ " and "No = ○ " He held a card with a triangle in one hand and circle in the other. As the students asked questions, they soon learned that they needed to ask Yes/No questions to get a meaningful response. The assignment could be to guess: my favorite food, a number between 1 and 100, a place in the neighborhood, an item in the room, etc., etc.

LUCINDA WINGARD

Answering on Paper

Moving from listening activities to literacy activities can be tricky for low-level students, but painless and fun if you spend a little time preparing materials before the lesson.

Many learning theorists stress the importance of listening activities. Students must be comfortable hearing the language before they can confidently produce it. Much of our requirement of language is that it help us decode the world around us, and that's through comprehending the language of others, not just producing our own. Beginning your lesson time with a low-stress listening activity can help your student make the transition from native to second language and get the most out of the tutoring session. A fun TPR warm-up activity or even just looking at pictures and asking your student to "show me the man who is plowing" or "where is something blue?" can get the student into an English mode without having to produce any of that strange foreign language right off.

Even students at a low literacy level can begin to make responses on paper to a listening exercise. Give your student the following answer sheet, or have her make it herself.

	yes	no
1.		
2.		
3.		

What's the Answer?

Now you can ask any number of comprehension or review questions, and she can put a check mark to answer, rather than answering orally. The questions might be about an activity the two of you had done together ("We bought a $.22 stamp") or personal information she's learning ("Your address is 1212 So. J"), or about a story she had made up in another session ("The family came from El Salvador"). Or, you might make up a list of patterned questions. The form of each question is the same, but content varies. For example, if you've been studying family terms, the questions might be:

Is your brother your father's son?
Is your aunt your mother's sister?
Is your cousin your grandfather's child?

If you've been practicing "where" questions, the pattern might be:

Is your son in school?
Are your parents in Thailand?
Is your husband at work?
Are the bananas at the store?

If you use pattern questions, read them rapidly. This trains your student to listen for content words, not to despair over losing the little words that are swallowed up in typical American speech.

You can also make an answer sheet to practice sight word recognition. Are you working on colors? Here's an answer sheet:

1. red blue

2. yellow green

You ask the student questions, e.g., "What color is your shirt?", and she circles the appropriate word. If you have students at different levels, the more advanced one can write the words, and the lower level student, by being able merely to recognize and circle the words, can keep up with the class work and not feel defeated by the task.

If you have two students or more, let them correct each other's paper. That means you're not the meany with the red pen, and they see that everyone makes mistakes.

Something's Missing

Once the student is recognizing some words, you can try the Missing-Word Paragraph. Give the student a sentence or paragraph, (whatever is appropriate to her level) with some words missing (but no space left). For example, the student has the script:

We went the Safeway yesterday. We bought chicken some grapes.

Then you read:

We went to the Safeway yesterday. We bought a chicken and some grapes.

The student has to make a mark wherever a word is missing:

We went^the Safeway yesterday. We bought^chicken^some grapes.

You can read the sample as many times as necessary for the student to find all the missing words, but don't slow down your pace. Speak with natural, normal speed and intonation.

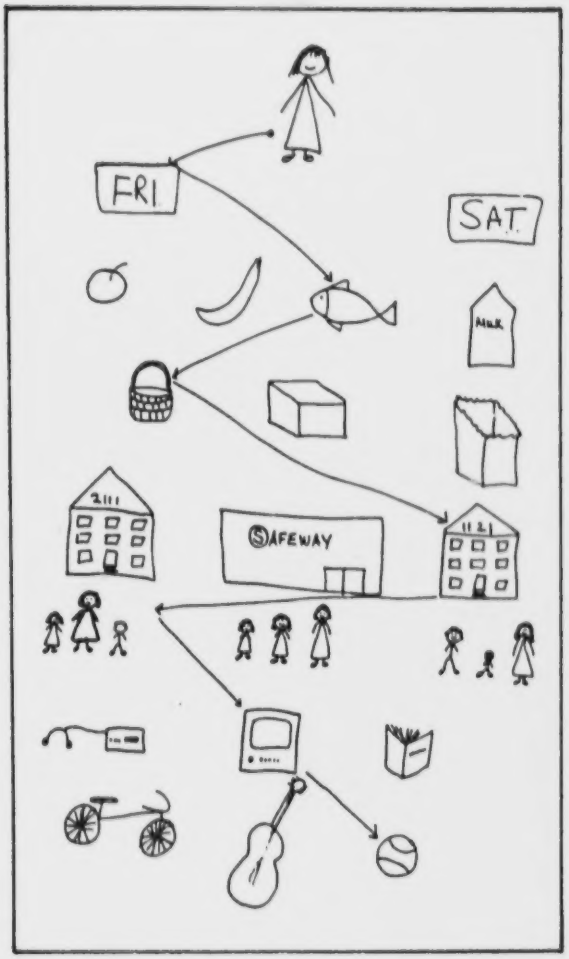
The purpose of this exercise is threefold. Of course, the student has the practice of reading English. She also has to pay attention to the puny little words that are so aggravating to a non-English speaker. She also will hear you speaking an example of good English in a normal way several times without her getting bored by it.

Discover the Story

This activity will take a bit of preparation on your part, but the material can be used for several activities. You make a "script" that offers choices to the student - it can be made with pictures for the non-literate student or words for the more advanced student. You tell a story, and the student draws lines from each level in the script to the appropriate item in the next level. For example, given the following picture script and hearing this story, the student would draw the lines as indicated.

> Chanhak lives in Tacoma with her family. Yesterday she went shopping. She bought some fish because she wanted to make fish stew. After she paid for the food, she put it in her basket and went home. She walked to her apartment building at 1121 So. I. When she got home, her three children were waiting for her. She never worried about her children being alone, because the older boy takes care of his two little sisters. The children were watching T.V. Chanhak said to them, "It's such a nice day, why don't you go outside and play ball?"

For a more literate student, the script would look like this:



Once the student has correctly indicated the progression of the story on the script, she can use it as a reference to re-tell the story. You can then have her tell a different story, using the other cues on the script. For example, my students told a story about Chandak going out with three girlfriends, listening to rock and roll music and deciding to learn how to play the guitar!

ANITA BELL
Tacoma Community House

Speaking for Themselves

Do you tutor more than one student? If so, you have a great opportunity to relax, stop talking, and let your students learn more English by speaking for themselves. Here are a few guides for cutting back on teacher-talk and encouraging student-talk:

Wait at least 5 seconds after asking a question to give the student a chance to answer - and let the other students, not you, offer help when the first student needs it.

When a student asks a question, give the other students a chance to answer it before you do.

Rather than instantly supplying the correct model when the student makes a mistake, give a cue about where the error is (e.g., indicate you want the past tense by gesturing with a hand back over the shoulder, or for a 4-word sentence with an error in the third word of the sentence, hold up four fingers, point to the first as you say the first word of the sentence, then the student supplies the rest, and you can make a melodramatic face at the third finger to indicate some work needs to be done). Always give the other students a chance to correct the error before you do.

There are lots of low-pressure, fun activities, that require little preparation by you, that can be used to encourage student participation and increase their language production. Here are some other helpful ideas.

Box of Stuff. Bring in a box of everyday or culturally interesting items. Students pick one item at a time. Each student must speak for one minute, or make 3 to 5 sentences about the object she chooses. Or one student selects an item (unseen by the other), and the other student must ask questions to elicit information and guess what the object is. Two students select several objects and make up a role-play dialog using them.

Pictures. Teacher shows a high interest picture (e.g., something from National Geographic magazine or a geography book about a student's home country). Students dictate information about the picture, which teacher writes down. You don't have to say a thing: use gestures and pantomime to show you want to know more. Low level students may just name objects seen. Higher level students can make whole sentences or even a story. In pairs, one student holds a picture unseen by the other. The first student describes what's in the picture. The second student can ask clarifying questions and tries to draw a picture that replicates the original.

Sorting. Give students pictures or words on cards which they must sort into categories. The categories may be things like things/actions, alive/non-living, green things/blue things, flying/crawling/swimming, or alphabetizing - it doesn't really matter. What matters is the students talking things over to decide what the categories are, and which goes where. One tutor with four students even has them sort themselves out and stand in order according to letter of first name, date of arrival in U.S., amount of loose change in pockets - anything that gets them talking to and asking questions of each other.

ANITA BELL

Listening Exercises

Joan Jones, a Missoula Voc-Tech teacher, has a class of preliterate students. For some of her pronunciation/listening parts of the lesson she encourages their developing literacy skills. On the left below is the paper she hands out to the students. On the right is what she says. The students circle one of the two responses to indicate what they have heard.

A.	1.	1	many	It is a red car.
	2.	1	many	Those are kittens.
	3.	1	many	There are 10 girls.
	4.	1	many	I have a pen.
		etc.		
B.	1.	?	no ?	Is she pretty?
	2.	?	no ?	They are playing ball.
	3.	?	no ?	The children are watching T.V.
	4.	?	no ?	Did you eat breakfast?
		etc.		
C.	1.	15	50	fifteen
	2.	13	30	thirteen
	3.	12	20	twenty
	4.	18	80	eighty
		etc.		

Exercise A can be devised at higher levels of difficulty for even very advanced students. Exercise B emphasizes listening for voice intonation and can also be scaled up using several ways we indicate questions in English. Joan follows up the third exercise with students reading what they circled.

Is This a Recording?

There may be a listening lab available to you and your student, though you might not be aware of it. All you have to do is let your fingers do the walking.

It's time to take advantage of the reels of recorded messages so many businesses and agencies have these days. Old standbys like Time and the Weather are good for starters but explore the informative lines on events, health concerns, jobs...(A few, like Time, may have a toll, but most are free.) All of them can be used to give low stress listening practice with the real phone. (Students never have to say a word.) Students also profit from exposure to a wide range of male and female voices.

After you've found a good clear one, jot down a few bits of specific information. On the first listening have your student identify something about the speaker and the main idea. This is not a test and since you can't hear, go with the answers your student gives: "Is it a man or woman speaking? Young or old? Reading or just talking? What was it all about? (If your student has no idea, make a list together of a few guesses and have a second listening to narrow the range.)

On another listening, ask your student to find out something specific: "Listen for the words 'the temperature is'! What does he say right after 'the temperature is'?" or "Count how many jobs she talks about." It's not necessary, however, that your student always recover information that the tape is designed to convey. A low level student could be asked to listen for numbers that come up in an IRS tape that not even you could comprehend.

Many governmental agencies, libraries, museums, colleges and universities offer taped messages. Check the blue pages (in King County) and be on the lookout for tapes of recorded messages whenever using the yellow pages.

Avoid the lengthy messages, keep a log of the calls you make to measure progress, and have fun with this.

MATT LASZEWSKI

Warm-up Activities

You can warm up both the student's language skills and interest by conversation activities that require the student to express opinions and feelings. This is not an interview, remember, or simply a display of the student's language--make it a shared experience by reciprocating with your thoughts and feelings. Here are a few ideas to get you going.

1. Ask the student to complete the following sentences:

   A good thing that happened to me this week was . . . .
   A bad thing that happened to me this week was . . . .

   Give the student a minute to think of the responses. You also complete the sentences for yourself. Discuss these events with your student.

2. Have the student tell you ten sentences about her/himself that begin with "I am . . ." You do it, too! Include nouns, verbs, adjectives.

3. Tell an anecdote about:

   A decision you made this week.
   Something you did that made someone else happy.
   Something you did that made yourself feel good.

   Compare stories with your student.

4. Complete these sentences to initiate a conversation about choices:

   I wish I could . . . .
   I wish I knew . . . .
   I wish I worked . . . .
   I wish I understood . . . .
   I wish I had . . . .

5. Have your student express preferences and discuss why. You can use a written list or picture cues.

   Would you rather live in the city or country?
   Would you rather have lots of money or lots of land?
   Would you rather have a small or large family?
   What do you like to do on your day off?
   Where would you like to go on a trip?

6. You could use pictures to get this idea of similarities and affinities off the ground.

   Are you more like the mountains or the sea?
   Are you more like a bird or a tiger?
   Are you more like a sailboat or a speedboat?

ANITA BELL

Dialogues

Thinking back to your Basic Training, you'll recall that you learned a greeting dialogue. If you ran into a native speaker of that language, would you be able to initiate a little conversation with it? If given plenty of time to just listen to it, to repeat it after a fluent speaker, and to practice it by taking one of the parts and responding to the other, you probably could initiate - get a conversation going on your own. But, there are no guarantees that the person you try it with will use exactly the words that you learned. Take a look at this one:

Cashier: Hello. A gallon of milk. That's $2.00.
Mary: Sorry, I only have a $20.00 bill.
Cashier: That's OK. $2.00, 3, 4, 5, $10.00.
Mary: Excuse me, I think that's wrong. I gave you a $20.00 bill.
Cashier: Oh, I'm sorry. Here you are.
Mary: Thank you. Good-bye.
Cashier: Bye.

(It's from **A NEW START**, a text by Mrowicki and Furnborough.)

The situation of getting incorrect change is an important one for which you'll want to give your student some language to use. From your experience with the greeting dialogue, you know how much practice it'll take before your student will be able to initiate such a conversation bravely. But you'll also want to roleplay with your student once the dialogue is over-learned. Roleplay, you say, is not your bag, nor is it your student's, right? Clearly identifying roles, using props, even putting on masks are all ways that can help to make pretending to be someone else a little easier. So tell your student to be an angry clerk and tell yourself to be a shy customer. Try it being children or have your student pretend to be an American nice person/not nice person. Let yourself go! It may sound like play, but then "all the world's a stage . . . ."

MATT LASZEWSKI

Common Remedies

A fun activity to try is to have students describe different remedies to common ailments. For example, how do you stop the hiccoughs? Answers might include "drink some water," "take a teaspoon of sugar," "press your thumbs against your ears," etc. One of the TCH teachers made a chart for students to fill in, according to both the customs of their native land and according to how they would deal with the same ailment in the U.S. Below is an example of a chart that has been filled out by a student.

What do you do for . .	. . . in your country?	in the U.S.?
a headache	①Pull the hair ②put the small on the head ③Put both thumbs on both sides of the head + start to make a few grounds ④ Comming the front + back of the body	See doctor
a cold	①Go to store + buy the aspirin ②Take morning showers	See doctor
a burn	①Take the cows stool + put it on the arm ②Put salt on the burn ③Use the magic to kill the burn devil (spirit)	See doctor
the flu	①Take morning showers	See doctor

As in the sample, you will most likely discover a diverse and fascinating list of remedies for dealing with common ailments in your students' homelands.

On the other hand, the remedy of "see doctor" (see sample sheet) mentioned for dealing with all the ailments here in the West suggests that the student had an inappropriate grasp of how westerners dealt with minor ailments. There is another disturbing side to this, and it is that indeed many refugees do see doctors more frequently than necessary. Often the results of these visits are newly prescribed drugs. There have been several occasions where refugees have been taking 2, 3, 4 and even 5 different drugs at one time, with prescriptions from different doctors who either are not aware of, or do not care about, other prescriptions the patient might be taking. Crisis clinics such as Pierce County's Chemical Abuse Resource Enterprise (C.A.R.E.) see more problems with this sort of chemical dependency among Southeast Asian refugees than dependencies on illegal drugs or alcohol.

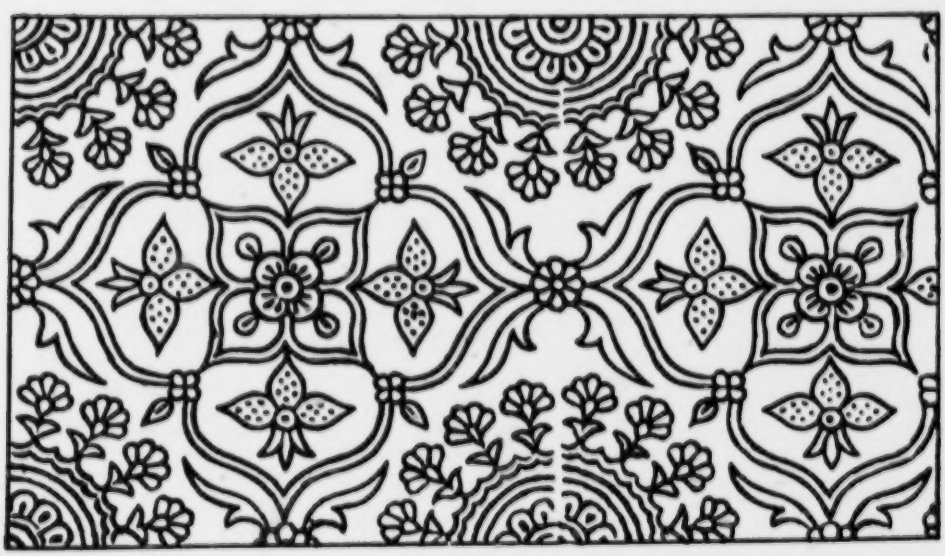
PETER SKAER

Overcoming Phone Phobia

TCH tutor Marcie Parrett had a great idea for practicing telephone dialogs. She alerted her mom that a student would be calling her, and asked her to respond appropriately, but didn't give details about the content of the call. That way, when the student called to do the fire/emergency dialog, the student had the experience of speaking with an unseen American, trying to make herself understood, and Marcie had a guage to see how well her student had learned the dialog. If you have a sympathetic friend or relative, it would be great practice for your student to call that person every now and then, to report or request information.

What Happens Next?

TCH tutor Wyleen Hendry and her students enjoy spontaneous, group story-telling. Wyleen starts a story (perhaps, "Last week I went for a walk. I walked to the park. When I was at the park I saw . . .") and then stops in the middle of the sentence. The student sitting next to her completes that sentence and adds a few more, then stops mid-sentence for the next student to take up the story. She has used this activity with a group of two to four students. She said the first time she did it, she needed to "put the words into the students' mouths" so they would get the idea of the process, but now they understand how to do it and enjoy creating new tales.



Gabby Gives Advice on Pronunciation

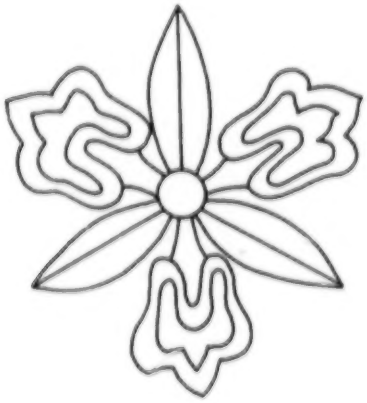
Dear Gabby,

I tutor several Vietnamese refugees twice a week. They seem to have real pronunciation problems so I have been spending a lot of time recently on various pronunciation drills. My problem is that some of the students find these drills very difficult and frustrating. One man keeps saying that if he saw the words and sentences written down that he would 'hear' better, and as a result speak better. My question is, should I give my students printed copies of our drills?

Ethel, Seattle, WA

Dear Ethel,

You have addressed a difficult but common problem. I find that those students who had years of formal education in their home country (such as the Vietnamese) are sometimes not convinced they're really studying until they have a book to take home and work out of. However, to improve your students' pronunciation they must first be able to hear, or discriminate, the differences between similar sounds. Once differences are noted then your students can start attempting to produce those sounds (or patterns). You are not really helping them to hear or produce sounds automatically by providing them a written guide during your pronunciation lesson. Remember that practicing pronunciation is a physical activity but that it also requires thinking - you will stimulate more thinking by forcing your students to actually <u>hear</u> the new sounds and patterns (rather than allowing them to see the differences by reading copies of your drills). After you have introduced and practiced your new sounds and patterns aurally/orally <u>then</u> you might want to give a copy of your drills to your student to take home and practice by themselves. If you taped the pronunciation section of your tutoring session your students could also listen to the tape at home while they look at their copy of the drills. In this way your student will still get the necessary introduction from you and will also have something to look at later to reinforce your efforts. Good luck!

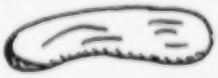


Using "Silly Putty"

It is awkward for a teacher to show a student how to produce a specific sound by pointing inside a student's mouth, or referring to an illustration. Using plaster teeth and Silly Putty is a good way for the teacher to show the position of the tongue in the mouth when producing specific sounds. The Plaster of Paris dentures can be obtained without charge from the University of Washington Dental School or any place that makes dentures.

To begin, you have to know a little bit about how the sounds are produced, acquainting yourself with where the tongue is in relation to the oral cavity, and what it does. Most pronunciation texts include cut-away illustrations of the mouth for each sound. Study these and practice making the sounds yourself to get a feel for how each sound is made, trying to feel where your tongue is and what it is doing. You don't have to learn all the sounds at once since you will be working with only a few sounds at a time. Also, not all English sounds are a problem for your students, so concentrate on only those that your student needs work in initially. As you gain confidence and experience you will add new sounds to your repertoire.

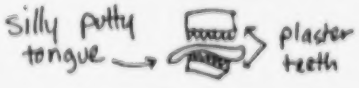
Next, you're ready for your plaster teeth and Silly Putty. Take the putty and put it in the palm of your hand, shaping and squashing it into the shape of a tongue:



Take the 'tongue' and put it between the upper and lower set of teeth. Practice putting the tongue in the vowel positions (in front to back and high to low positions). After that, try placing the tongue in the correct positions for your target sounds. Practice in front of a mirror and your closest friends before you attempt to try it with your students. With a little practice I think you will find this method a useful addition to your pronunciation teaching strategies.

Using this technique works particularly well in a one-to-one teaching situation or with a small group because the teeth are small and visibility is limited.

If plaster teeth are not available, it is possible for the teacher to use her hand (as the tongue)placed in the appropriate position at the side of your face or even using cardboard cutouts to do the same things.



by Seattle area volunter, JULIE COLBERT

Developing Language and Thinking Skills

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who divide things into two categories and those who don't. Since Americans tend to be of the former persuasion - indeed, our very language often encourages this/not this kinds of identification - it's helpful to our students to begin thinking and talking in those terms. Keep in mind in these suggested activities: it's not how the student categorizes things that is important; it's how well she can use the language to explain herself that's the goal.

To start off, bring in a variety of objects that can be grouped together in different ways. These might include:

- felt pens
- crayons
- children's blocks
- dry beans--brown and white
- dry rice--brown and sticky
- noodles--whole wheat and bean threads
- toy cars and trucks
- small plastic animals
- plastic and metal tableware
- flowers
- colored rocks

Set four objects, one of which is noticeably different, in front of the student. Be sure she knows the name, color and use of each object. Ask, "Which one is different?" When she identifies the odd object, ask her, "How is it different?"

Be sure the differences are obvious and easily defined when beginning this exercise. For example, the first group might be three felt pens and one spoon. The student will probably identify the spoon as different. When you first ask how something differs, you may need to coach her a little to get the meaning of the questions across. Ask about the pens, "What are these for?" and about the spoon, "What is this for?" Then ask again "How is the spoon different from the pens?" She should be able to say something on the order of, "It's for eating, not writing."

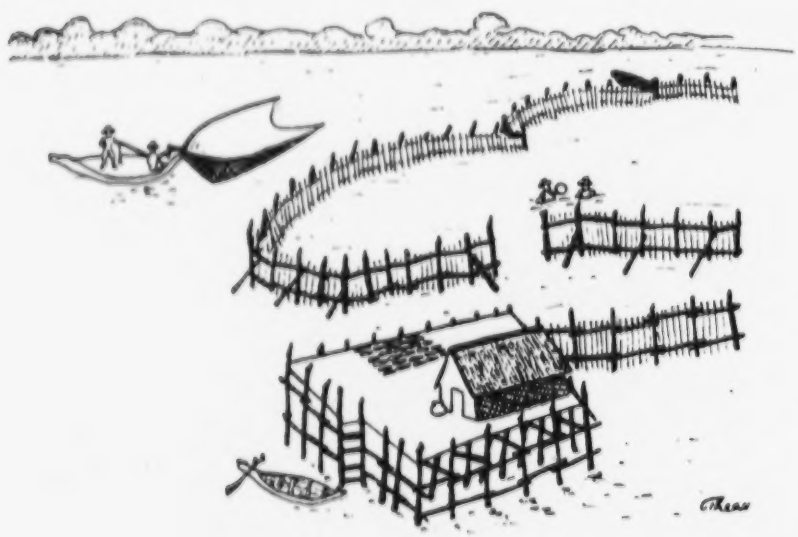
Use similar objects that can be divided differently for the next group. For example, it might be three plastic spoons and one metal one, or a red pen, red crayon, red block, and a yellow block. Do this activity many different times so that she comes to understand she is not expected to memorize certain groupings of objects or that there is any right response expected. She just needs to get into the process of analytical thinking, categorizing the objects, and justifying her decision.

After several sessions of identifying which one is different, give the student four to six objects and have her divide them into two groups. Once again, have her explain her actions. This challenges her to examine her thinking and to use her new language to explain that thinking. Try to use items that could be grouped in at least two different ways. For example, the food items could be grouped according to what they are, what color they are, or whether they are used by Asians or Americans. Given flowers and rocks, the student might group them according to color, size, or whether they are living or non-living. If you have more than one student, let them know it's OK to group the items in different ways - as long as they talk it over in English.

Once the student has gotten the idea of the process using objects, you can do precisely the same activities with pictures on 3 X 5 cards. (Sources of pictures are magazines, catalogs, and used primer workbooks, usually available from your neighborhood elementary school.) Another activity is to give your student a stack of cards, then ask for various categories within them. "Give me all the pictures of happy people...of animals on the farm...of things that go in all the water...of things used for work."

Eventually, you'll be able to give the student a stack of word cards and have her categorize those. Be prepared for interesting insights into your student's thought processes. One of mine, given the following cards - farmer, doctor, house, teacher - identified "farmer" as the different word. I expected "house", since it didn't describe a job. She said, quite sensibly, though, that the farmer was different because he was poor, and all the others implied plenty of money.

ANITA BELL



Language and Culture

I have heard culture defined as the water in which we swim. It is so ingrained in us that we take it for granted and don't think about it. I have a neighbor who is from Cambodia but who now is in the sixth grade in Puyallup. She has said to me, "I don't know why, but those kids are so rude," and some of her classmates have said to me, "She's so stuck-up - I can't say why, she just is." To the girl, lowered eyes, a soft voice, and avoidance of boys her age are the proper attitude, while the classmates think direct eye contact, forthright speech and casual friendliness to all are the way to deal with the world. We tend to assume that the way we cope with the world is the way most other people cope with it. When we can get more information and learn that there are other ways, we can not only appreciate the variety, but can also broaden our perspective of the world and our repertoire of ways to interact with that world.

Our students are experiencing daily the full-speed collision of cultures. This can abe simultaneously exhiliarating, frightening, bewildering, challenging, exhausting, humorous, and life-threatening. Anything we as tutors and friends can do to help the students become more aware of what's happening to them and help them identify points of culture conflict will begin to ease their transition as they struggle to learn the new culture while maintaining cultural identity and integrity. Conversation time, structured around the idea of culture conflict (or cultural differences), is time well spent in tutoring sessions. The student will be highly motivated to communicate information to you about her culture and she will be eager to learn from you the mysteries of American culture. High interest, immediately relevant topics are a great stimulus to language use and development. And while your student is expanding her receptive and expressive language skills through these conversations, she'll also be working through the issues that surround anyone dropped into an alien and often threatening culture.

Early in December I had the opportunity to meet with some of the energetic, hard-working women involved in Seattle's Pre-Natal Tutoring Project. To prepare myself for the meeting I read all the materials I could find on Southeast Asian health practices (unfortunately, there weren't a lot). As I made a list of possible discussion topics for pre-natal tutors and students to cover, I realized that many of these topics would provide lively lessons for all kinds of tutor/student pairs, whether or not parenthood were on the horizon. An individual's view of health, body image, and the ways parts of the world interact is greatly influenced by culture and in turn influences many daily behaviors and beliefs.

Many Southeast Asian beliefs have their origin in the Ancient Chinese philosophy of Taoism.

> "In the Taoist view, all things in the universe operate by a balance between two opposite elements, the Yin and the Yang. The interaction of Yin and Yang give rise to the cycles of nature as well as to all movement in the universe. The two elements are complementary to one another, and balance is essential for the harmonious operation of all things . . . .
>
> As portrayed in the symbol of the Yin and the Yang, everything that is Yin has a small amount of the Yang within it, and everything that is Yang contains a small amount of Yin . . . .
>
> According to Taoist philosophy, a human being must strive to live in harmony with the natural world by honoring the balance between Yin and Yang. Good health is the result of such harmonious existence." Southeast Asian Health Care, Indochinese Cultural and Service Center, Portland, Oregon.

Many traditional Southeast Asian health practices are preventative, devoted to maintaining or restoring the proper cosmic balance. Body and mind are not seen as separate, so that health care focuses on both the physical and metaphysical. Western health care tends to be a matter of intervention during a crisis, rather than prevention. Instead of seeking harmony with the natural world, westerners tend to manipulate and subdue the elements. When a western medical practitioner is faced with a Southeast Asian patient, language difference is obviously not the only barrier to communication!

The supernatural world is immediately present to most Southeast Asians. All the living or once-living things have spirits which can influence events in the world. Right behavior, prayer and offerings can propitiate spirits, but angered spirits can cause disease through the entrance of a "bad wind" into the body. Some folk medicine practices, such as coining and cupping (which leave red marks on the skin), are designed to release the bad wind from the diseased body.

Most Southeast Asians use a combination of western and folk medicine along with metaphysical practices (such as the right nutritional combinations to maintain the Yin-Yang balance) and religious activities to maintain and restore health. Get your student to talk about her beliefs and practices. If she can identify what's important to her and what kinds of conflicts may come up as she enters the western medical system, she'll be prepared for whatever might happen and be able to make decisions that will solve problems in a manner satisfactory to herself. A trip with your student to the Asian market to look at the folk medicines offered there (Tiger Balm, eucalyptus oil, dried herbs and roots); looking at National Geographic pictures of various peoples and cultures - pregnant women, nursing moms, sick people, people praying at temples or shrines, people in doctors' offices or being visited by a shaman; discussing what each of you does in various situations - feeling sick, having an accident, having a child with a fever, going to the doctor and having a hard time explaining your malaise; reading a brief story or dialog you have written to raise the issues of cross-cultural health practices: all these can serve as stimuli to a conversation lesson.

Some of the following are ideas to keep in mind as you engage your student in conversation. They are points where the two cultures, coming from different angles, are likely to collide. The effects of the collision can be ameliorated if your student is aware of potential conflicts and feels confident to make decisions consistent with her beliefs.

-Origin of disease
    Balance of Yin and Yang (cold and hot)
    Bad wind, bad spirits
-Depression, loss, culture shock
-Diet
    Everyday
    For special needs
    Infant feeding
-Who is present at birth
-Who gives assistance during times of sickness
-Procedures, traditions before, during and after birth
-Traditions surrounding other life events
    Marriage, death, birthdays, coming of age
    Care of orphans and old people
-Body image - (Likely areas of conflict for Southeast Asians who undergo medical practices are their view of the sacredness of the head area; their extreme modesty, especially of the lower torso area; and their view that many common Western medical practices, such as blood sampling or any procedures that cut the skin, are dangerously invasive.)
-Informed consent - (Many westerners like to be informed about every possible complication and any side effects of potential future procedures, while many Southeast Asians may feel that talking about potential problems may bring them to pass.

So, you're interested in hearing about your student's practices and beliefs about health care. She's motivated to talk about them and can benefit from discussing issues raised when her culture and American culture differ. How do you structure a tutoring session around this? I think one of the best ways is to follow a conversation process based on the process developed by Paolo Freire, the Brazilian literacy worker and social reformer. The VTP's own Lucinda Wingard has modified this a bit as a result of her experience teaching in ESL classrooms. Her suggestions, combined with Freire's, are the basis for the following process. Start with a "code", something to serve as a focus for your conversation. See the accompanying chart for possible codes and examples of questions.

The first stage is to **IDENTIFY THE ELEMENTS** of the code. You elicit this from your student through questioning. The questions at this stage are generally simple who/what/where questions. Even very low level students can generally tackle this stage of the process. And even if you never get much beyond this, the content of the code is interesting to the student and will motivate her to use all the language she can and to think about issues that the code raises for her.

At the second stage, you will **IDENTIFY THE CONTEXT.** This means to move beyond the bounds of the picture or dialog, to think about the implications inherent in the place or event being discussed. These questions may increase in complexity.

The third stage is to **RELATE THE CODE TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.** At this stage the student will communicate to you what about the code is most meaningful to her. You may easily get sidetracked into an experience story here.

At the fourth stage, the student will **IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM.** Only the student can do this, or the process will lose its essential focus. Although you may have a good idea of what the student will see as the problem, it is necessary for the student to define the problem herself so that she has a personal stake in the problem-solving process and is highly motivated to use her English for the process. You may elicit the information by simply asking, "What's the problem here?" or you may need to ask more exploratory questions to help the student define the problem.

The final stage is to **PROPOSE SOLUTIONS.** Once the student has defined the problem, help her brainstorm many different possible solutions. It may take a few tries at this for the student to get the idea behind brainstorming: any possible solution is acceptable. The point is to get a lot of ideas out on the table for consideration (incidentally using a lot of English to express those ideas). Once you have a list of proposed solutions, the student can evaluate the pros and cons of each one and express her opinion about which solutions are preferable and why. A sample list is not included for these, since the suggestions depend on how the student defines the problem and what she would see as possible solutions.

Although there are often problems that arise when two cultures come in contact with each other, it's possible that as you discuss cultural differences with your student, many interesting topics will come up that don't necessarily involve a problem. In that case, the fourth stage is simply to **IDENTIFY CULTURAL DIFFERENCES,** helping the student be aware of the different assumptions and behaviors in each culture.

The final stage, if the fourth stage is to identify cultural differences, is simply to **EXPRESS PREFERENCES.** Here, the student explains whether she prefers the traditional practices or those of her new culture and why. As in stages three, four, and five, there are no correct answers. The focus is on the student: her ideas, experiences, and opinions are important and valued, the substance of the session.

This process is successful because it is student-centered. The student learns language that's relevant to her experience, feelings, and opinions. The first three stages are analytic - the student expresses what she thinks and feels, makes inferences and evaluates. At the various stages the student will:

1. Label her environment.
2. Recognize situations, be aware of the cultural context of events.
3. Make the language of the lesson relevant to her own life.
4. Develop or exercise critical thinking skills, use her experience to determine causes and generalize information.
5. Use her knowledge and experience to influence her environment.

This system encourages the student to use her own ideas and opinions. She will be highly motivated to translate those into English. The classroom time becomes then not merely a listing of words and phrases, but a translation of the student's own life into her own language.

Sample Code Chart

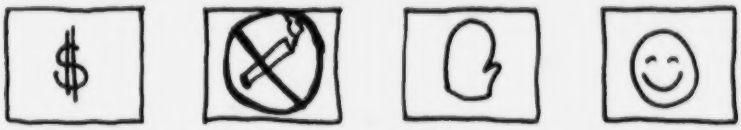
CODE	1 IDENTIFY THE ELEMENTS	2 IDENTIFY THE CONTEXT
Shelf of traditional medicines at Asian market	What is this?	What is this for? Where do you rub this? Why do you use this? Can you use it every-day? How did you learn to use this? Who else uses this? Who would not use this?
Picture of a nursing mother	Who is this? What is the mother doing? What is the baby doing? Where are they?	Does the baby drink anything but her mother's milk? How old is this baby? For how many months do babies nurse? Why is it good to nurse babies?
Visit by your student to the doctor	Where did you go? What did the nurse do? What did the doctor say?	Why did you go to the doctor? Did the doctor help? What do you do after the appointment? How do you pay?
Dialog between mother and sick child	Who is sick? What is the mother saying?	Why is the child sick? What will the mother do? How does the mother feel?

5 PROPOSE SOLUTIONS OR EXPRESS

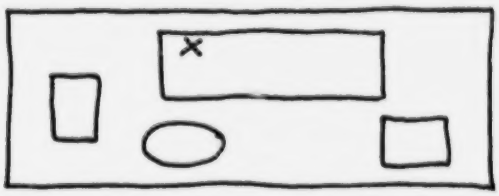
3 RELATE TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE	4 IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM	OR IDENTIFY CULTURAL DIFFERENCES
Which medicine do you like to use for headache, stomachache? When did you last use this? What happened before and after you used this?	What do you do if you can't buy traditional medicine? Do traditional medicines work on diseases in this country? What would your child's teacher do if he sees the marks from coining?	Which medicine do you use for a headache? Which medicine can you buy at an American drugstore for headache?
Did you (or your mother or sister) feed your babies this way? How long did you nurse? How are the children now? What else did you do to take care of your children? What was easy/hard about taking care of your babies?	How does the mother feed the baby if she has to go to work? What if the baby doesn't get enough to eat? Where does the baby go when the mother goes to ESL class?	How do most mothers feed their babies in your country? How do mothers feed their babies here? Why are there differences in how women feed babies
How did you feel at the doctor's office? What did you like/not like? Do you go to the doctor often? What did yo do in your native country when you were sick?	Did the doctor give you medicine? How often do you take it? Can you understand the doctor? Do you believe what the doctor tells you? Does American medicine work for you? What bothers you about the doctor's office?	What's different about being sick and in your native country? What did you do when you were sick there? What do you do differently now? What do most Americans do when they're sick?
What do you do when your child is sick? When was your child last sick? What happened?	What if the child doesn't get better? Who takes care of a sick child if the mother has to work? What if the mother doesn't know what to do for her child? What if the child doesn't want to take medicine?	What are common childhood illnesses in your country? What are common here? What do you do in your country for a sick child? What do people do here?

3 Ideas for Beginning Literacy

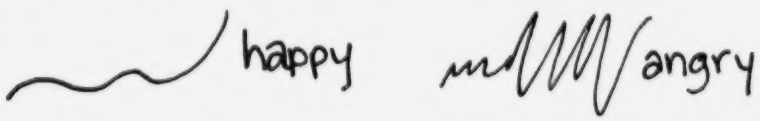
1. Someone who hasn't learned to read in any language needs practice in dealing with symbols. Use flash cards or visuals of common symbols around us for your student to match with your spoken words:



Have your student draw a map of the room you are in and place herself in it with an X.



Play games of drawing lines to describe feelings.



2. Keep your student's anxiety about reading low. If you want her to read a paragraph, "pre-teach" it by first discussing the general topic (using pictures - hand drawings are great) and be sure that she is very familiar with key vocabulary words.

3. After reading a paragraph, a student can be more confused by the comprehension questions than the actual meaning of the text. Try making statements that the student can label as "True" or "False" to prove her comprehension.

LUCINDA WINGARD

Early Reading Activities

Is your student confused by the changing sound of vowels, by the fact that letters have a name that's different from its sound in a word? Try this analogy.

What's her name?	Chhem
What does she speak?	Khmer
What's her name?	Jane
What does she speak?	English
What's its name?	"A"
What does it speak?	a

Play a game: match word, letter, and picture cards.

Read detached syllables with similar sounds.

ac	am
ad	at

Then read them embedded in words:

sack	Sam
sad	sat

But if you stick with words that strictly follow all the phonetic rules, it can be rather boring and devoid of meaning. So get some words from the Real World. Have your student copy any printed word(s) she comes across that she thinks might have bearing on her life. Discuss with your student what she thinks the words might mean. Encourage her to make guesses about the content (Is it a warning? Does it give directions? Does it require a response?). Then help her decode the words - "translate" them for her. When words are connected to reality this way, when they are seen to be a part of the student's experience, they are more likely to be learned, retained, and used. (from Vancouver, B.C. TESL Conference)

ANITA BELL

Levels of Literacy

Literacy is a vital step in mastering a language, once the student has an initial grasp of the basic listening and speaking skills. It is important not to stress literacy too early in the learning process, or the student may become bogged down in the intricacies of the written word while not understanding the meaning of the spoken word.

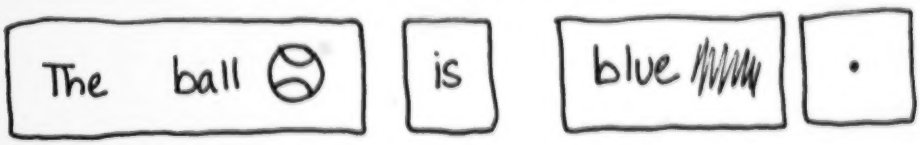
As a practical manner, though, literacy is a handy tool for the tutor who wants to leave her student with something to study between visits. Also, the student who is literate in his own language may be eager to start his own English-native language dictionary and phrase book.

This article is a description of some literacy activities that I have found helpful with students who are ready for that step. Because the S.E. Asian alphabets are truly phonetic, a phonics approach to English is greeted with some skepticism by the students. I have found the sight-reading approach more realistic. And because my classes were multi-level, I always included plenty of picture cues to go with the words and sentences so that even students who weren't ready to read could participate in the activities.

Use of a Story Picture. A picture of interest to the student can be used to elicit language. The first lesson centered on the picture should be entirely oral.

Who is that? Where are they? What is the mother doing? What are the children doing? What color is the ball? What is she wearing? What is on the stove? etc.

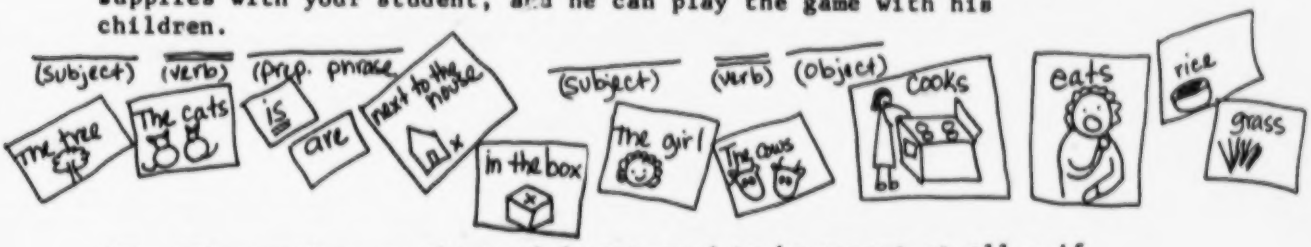
Using all familiar vocabulary and using one sentence structure at a time (e.g., noun + verb; noun + to be + adjective; noun + to be + location), the next lesson can be spent building sentences with word cards. At first, the teacher can construct the sentence that the student gives orally as a response. T: "What color is the ball?" S: "The ball is blue." Then the teacher lays out the cards:



The student can then construct sentences himself from supplied cards. Initially, give the student only enough cards for one sentence so the chance for error is reduced. Once the student understands the activity and is familiar with the cards, set out enough cards to make several different sentences.

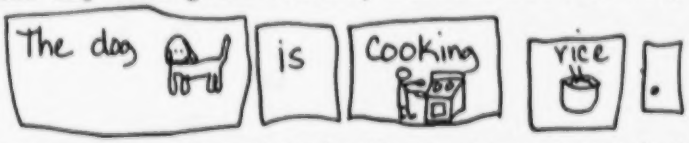
Some student may need picture cues on the cards for quite some time. Even if the student is "reading" the picture rather than the word, the activity has value in teaching word order of sentences. For students who read the individual words easily, you may want to include cues for parts of speech - e.g., underline subjects with yellow, verbs with red, objects blue, prepositional phrases green, etc. It's not necessary at this (or any) stage, but can help with a game later on.

The Sentence Game. After the student has made different kinds of sentences about the picture (or tangible objects), he should be ready to play the sentence game without a picture or objects present. Again, you may or may not need complex sentences, though each time the game is played, it's advisable to stick to sentence structure. All subject cards can be kept in one envelope, verbs in another, etc. If the cards and envelopes are color-cued and you also make a color-cued blank sentence pattern to use as a guide, you can leave all the game supplies with your student, and he can play the game with his children.

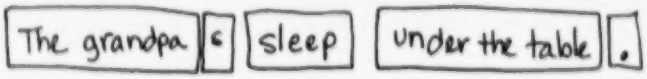


(The illustrations on the card do not need to be expert at all - if you read each card at the beginning of the game for your student, even the crudest picture will usually serve as an adequate reminder of the word's meaning.)

. The student may make grammatically correct but unlikely sentences.



This can be an occasion of much hilarity as you act out being a dog who cooks. Later on, the student who has gained confidence and skill at the game may exercise his creativity by purposefully making nonsense sentences. One elderly Chinese-Cambodian in my class made this sentence:



and laughed as he explained to me, "They drink beer too much."

Reading Stories. Once the student is sight-reading these words in sentences, you can move to simple stories. With a picture like the one at the beginning of this article you can, with your student, compose a simple, oral story. For example,

> Hoa is a young woman.
> She has two children.
> Her husband is at work.
> She is cooking dinner.
> Her sons are playing ball.

After the usual comprehension checks (What's her name? What are the children doing?), you can write the story - type or hand-write it, one sentence per line, or write each sentence on a separate strip of paper. If you have students at different levels you may want to use picture cues with this activity, too.

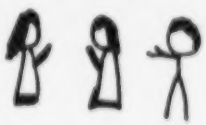
The student can repeat each sentence after you say it, can point out the correct sentence as you read it, put the sentence strips in order, and finally read each sentence as you point to it.

Pros and Cons. The advantage of the above activities is that you can control the vocabulary and grammar that are used. You can keep the vocabulary simple and can inundate the student with the standard sentence forms with which you wish him to become familiar. You can also expand vocabulary by plugging new words into familiar patterns. The disadvantage is that unless you have pictures of high interest to your student to illustrate your simple sentences and word card games, these activities will become boring after a while.

Experience Stories. The most meaningful language is that which describes the student's life. As soon as you can, get the student talking about what he does every day, what he did in his native country, what he's interested in. You may need a family member to translate some words. Use this language (again, cued with pictures if necessary) for your sentence games and stories. Discuss it all orally first, using comprehension checks as usual. After the student is proficient with the oral version of the story, present it in written form. You will probably find that the student learns to read most quickly the words and language that he himself has chosen. One of my P-2 students dictated, then learned to read this story:

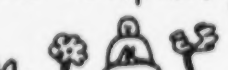
In Cambodia I liked New Year's very much.

I visited my friends.



I took flowers and food to the temple.

The flowers were for Buddha.



The food was for the monks.

Everyone was happy.

ANITA BELL

Student Journals

I encourage my class of intermediate-level students to keep a journal. It gives them a framework for home-study, puts their newly-learned English to immediate use, and gives me an idea both of their thoughts and their current abilities with the language.

Recently we spent some time looking at pictures of refugee camps and discussing conditions there. After a period of discussion, I made lists on a large sheet of paper (so everyone could see). One day, we made a list of good things and bad things in camp.

Good Things in Camp	Bad Things in Camp
safe	not enough food
no shooting	not enough water
friendly people	not enough medicine
school	people sick
	people homesick
	crowded
	no job

The next day, we made a list of things people do in camp. It included:

go to school	carry water
take care of children	work in garden
do assigned work	think about home
cook food	wash clothes

The students copied down in their journals those phrases and words which are new and/or meaningful to them. The assignment then was to go home and write two things about what they did in camp. As you can see from the following samples, each student creates a story according to his/her ability and true to his/her experiences and interests.

> Ny Sylaroth. I live in the refugee camp i feels house sick because i no see my mother and father and sister too.

> Noy Phetkany. I live in the camp. I sale food in the store. In the morning I take my children to school and in afternoon about 3 o'clock I go get them.

> Bounkham Maokhamphiou. Before I lived in a refugee camp in Thailand. I usually go to school every day in the morning at about 7 o'clock. I students mans and womans. There are Lao, Hmong, Cambodian and Vietnam. I always speak English to our friend and teacher.

Students with limited writing skills can still keep a journal. Because I never correct journal entrees - wanting to encourage free expression - anything the student writes (even just a list of words) is O.K. If the student doesn't feel up to writing, she can always draw a picture which is then used as a conversation-starter at the next session. This picture was made by a student after a discussion of farming:

ANITA BELL

Games, Etc....

The Last Few Minutes of Class

Use a magazine picture that's of interest to your student. In a race against the clock, have your student say (or, for an upper level student, list):

all the colors seen
all the activities
all the nouns
everything that starts with a particular letter
3 things that are happening
3 things that happened before the action in the picture
3 things that will happen later

Or, work from words back to the picture. Have your student think of a location - for example, farm, Goodwill store, the kitchen, friend's house, doctor's office. Then have her say everything she can think of that is in that location. Then she can draw a picture illustrating the place. At your next session, you might have her tell a story about something that has happened at the place she drew.

ANITA BELL

Gamble for Words

Purpose: to provide practice on either basic sight words and/or other sight words.

Materials: word cards and dice

Procedures: Place the word cards face down on the table. One student rolls a die and then picks up the same number of word cards as the number on the die. The student must be able to say each word she picks up. Each correct pronunciation is worth one point. The student getting the most points is the winner.

MICHAEL TATE

Community Photographs

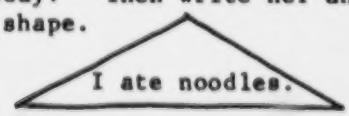
A good way to help familiarize students with their local community is to display photographs of the local surroundings. Pictures of your town's major shopping areas, service agencies, hospitals, etc., are useful in helping the students become familiar with important parts of their community. The volunteer program office walls and/or classroom walls would be effective places for display.

FRANCES TANAKA
Phoenix Center, Centralia Community College

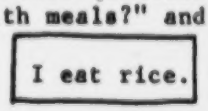
Verb Tense Drills

Here's a verb drill that you can use again and again, because the student supplies the creative input to keep things interesting. You'll need a blank piece of paper (or a chalkboard), a pen, some shapes cut out of construction paper, and small strips of paper, each with a verb that your student knows written on it in the root form (e.g., eat, sit, walk).

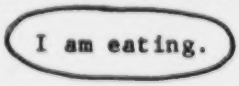
Begin by asking your student questions which she will answer in a particular tense. For example, ask, "What did you eat for breakfast today?" Then write her answer on the paper and enclose the answer in a shape.



Ask another question to elicit another tense. "What do you usually eat with meals?" and write that answer enclosed in another shape.



Give her a cookie and ask the next question, "What are you doing now?" Then enclose that answer in a third shape.



Do this to get an answer in every tense the student knows. It's not necessary to use the same verb in all the sentences, but for the first time you do the exercise, it makes the purpose clearer to the student. Now read a prepared-ahead-of-time list of sentences in various tenses to your student. If you're a quick thinker, you may be able to think these up spontaneously, but I like having a list in my hand in case the old brain can't take the pressure. Also, by making the list ahead of time, I can look over past lesson plans and incorporate vocabulary that has come up recently and can cover topics the student may have mentioned in conversation. As you say a sentence, indicate to the student that she should pick up the construction paper shape that corresponds to the shape around the model sentence for that tense. For example, given the above models, the student would pick up the rectangles when you say, "You visited your aunt in Everett last week," and the triangle when you say, "If you tie up the buffalo too tight, it kicks." (Of course, if you use the Language Experience Approach with your student, you'll be picking up plenty of informational tidbits like this with which to construct sentences!)

After doing this for a bit, give your student the stack of word cards. Now, you hold up a shape - perhaps a circle - and she draws a card - perhaps "stand." Then she makes a sentence in the appropriate tense - perhaps, "I am not standing in the kitchen."

If you have two students, you can demonstrate the procedure, then let the two of them do it alone. Why should you be doing the talking when the students could take over?

After they've got the system down, you can add feedback. If one student makes a correct response, have the other say, "That's it. Good job," (or any other feedback they might hear in daily American speech). An incorrect response could call forth, "Oops, try again." (If it's just you and one student, you can still do this. You'll just have to bring yourself to make an error now and then.)

If you consistently use the same shape for the same tense every time you do this drill, then when the student gets more advanced, you'll be able to say, "Remember the rectangle, for before? When the word changes for that, we call it past tense." I'm not sure exactly what advantage it is to the student to learn terms like past, simple present, present continuous and what not, but teachers and students alike seem to enjoy throwing around technical terms like that!

ANITA BELL

The Real World Enters the Classroom

TCH tutor **Wyleen Hendry's** student had gone to the home of an American friend for Thanksgiving and asked Wylene for an appropriate way to say "thank you". Wyleen suggested a thank-you note, so the remainder of the lesson was spent in composing, refining and writing the note. Her student was so inspired by this process that she asked Wyleen to help her write a letter to another friend! I think this is a good reminder to us tutors that any time we can do something real with our students - instead of covering the forms of letters, writing a real letter to a real person - we catch their interest, their motivation is high, and they end up with a product from their lesson that is relevant to the rest of their lives.

Wyleen also reminded us that many a lesson plan can be supplanted by some urgent happening in the student's life. A child had been assaulted at a neighborhood school, so when Wyleen's student showed her the poster describing the suspect, the focus of the day's session became the deciphering of the poster and discussing personal safety measures.

Survival Tidbits

Does your student understand if someone says "Uh-huh", shrugs shoulders, makes a "thumbs up" sign, or cautions, "uh-oh"? An activity that can provide a relaxing break during a class session as well as teach a bit of American culture is to do a response drill (described in your handbook) that requires a gesture or a non-word utterance as response.

For a valuable early literacy activity try what Community House tutor Iyana Lee does: rather than just have her students learn to write their names and addresses, they put the knowledge to work by learning to fill out the blue slip required in the reception area of DSHS offices.

For those of you who provide transportation for your students to various appointments, consider taking the extra time to ride the bus. Then you've not only helped your student that day, but given her the tool to help herself on another day.

ANITA BELL

Teaching Vocabulary for Feelings

ESL students generally learn a few basic adjectives early on in their studies: good and bad, difficult and easy, happy and sad. They face many challenges in their new culture and experience varied and deep emotions, yet often are restricted to those early adjectives to describe what's happening and how they feel. It's important that our students acquire the English tools that are necessary for economic survival and self-sufficiency. But it's also important that they master the language skills to identify - for themselves and their new American friends - their inner experiences.

Lively tutorial sessions can be built around the introduction and use of new vocabulary to express thinking and feeling. With your student, brainstorm a list of words that can be used to describe feelings. You might introduce the topic by bringing in pictures of people showing different emotions (photo books from the library are helpful), or you might describe, briefly, some recent incident that happened to you and that aroused strong feelings - for example, a car cutting in front of you on the freeway, strange noises heard in the night, a letter from a long-lost relative. If your student can't come up with many words, add a few of your own to the list (remembering the rule of the thumb about introducing 5 to 7 new vocabulary items per session). Here are a few examples:

rested	shy	high
patient	worried	depressed
angry	anxious	joyous
happy	confident	tender
irritable	frustrated	sentimental
nostalgic	guilty	terrified
strong	puzzled	silly
brave		

When you go over the list with your student, try to avoid using a dictionary to define the words. Instead, have a picture and/or a brief story to illustrate each meaning. For example, with a picture of a smiling woman in her bathrobe, you might say, "She went to bed early last night. The baby didn't cry all night, and the neighbors were very quiet. She didn't wake up until 8:00 a.m. She feels rested." Or, with a photo of your father as a young man, standing next to his first car, "My father is nostalgic about the past. He thinks everything was better then. He says the cars were better, everything was cheaper, and people were happier."

Add a personal touch to the definitions. "I feel rested after I sit under a tree and read a book for an hour. I don't have to work, I don't worry about anything, so I'm rested." "I'm nostalgic about my childhood. I remember many happy things. I don't remember bad things." And ask your student, "When do you feel rested? What are you nostalgic about?" Remember, too, when explaining a meaning, you can define it by its close synonym and its opposite, if the student is familiar with those. "He's very sad and <u>not</u> hopeful about the future. He's depressed."

As a practice activity, ask your student questions that will require the listed words as answers - and have your student grill you, too!

How do you feel when . . .
you answer correctly in class?
you argue with a friend?
you have a bad dream?
you don't have enough money?
you listen to music from your country?
your teacher doesn't understand you?
you get a letter from a friend?

Given the list of emotions, your student can fill in the blank - either literally on a worksheet you make, or orally as you say incomplete sentences.

He can't get a job, and he doesn't know how he will pay the rent.
He feels _____.
If someone gives me a present, I feel _____.
When Cambodians see Americans doing things the Cambodians don't understand, they feel _____.

Using the high-interest, emotionally-charged pictures again, tell a 2 or 3 sentence story and have the student select the appropriate picture from a group of pictures.

"Thanh has finished a training course. He got good grades and he's good at his new skill. He is confident that he will find work soon."

Then, ask your student to describe what's going on in the pictures, to tell a story about how the person feels, why he feels that way, and what will happen next. To get the student going on this, you may need to ask a series of conversation questions.

Is that the mother or grandmother? Has she seen the baby before?
Is this her first grandchild? Does she like having grandchildren?
What is she saying to the baby? How does she feel?

You will most likely find that your student enjoys learning new words to express feelings and thoughts he already holds. These activities can be a springboard for fruitful conversation sessions, both broadening your student's ability with English and opening up new lines of communication between the two of you.

ANITA BELL

Using a Community Resource

The Cooperative Extension is a resource for all residents and may be particulary helpful to you as a tutor looking for ways to enrich your teaching. There are many bulletins available on a wide variety of subjects from gardening to cooking, food preserving, budgeting, pest control and beyond. These bulletins are usually written in fairly simple English and often have attractive illustrations. The cost is low, generally $.25-$.50. A free catalog is yours for the asking.

Some counties have a telephone tape service. You can call the specified number and request an informational tape, selecting from a variety of subjects. These can be the basis for great listening activities for intermediate to advanced students. (If the Cooperative Extension in your county doesn't have this service, then the library probably does.)

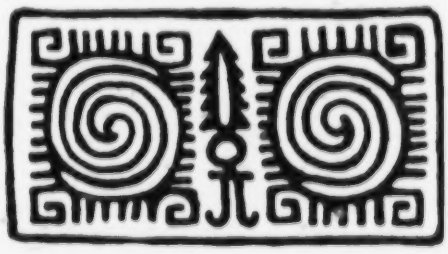
Ten counties around the state have a Master Gardener Program. A hotline is listed in the phone book - call in your gardening questions - and trained volunteers are available for consultation. Fifteen counties have a Master Preserver Program. This also includes a hotline for questions about any kind of food preservation techniques. Think of the ESL possibilities of such a demonstration - and the tasty culinary rewards!

King, Pierce, Snohomish, Yakima and Spokane Counties participate in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program. Aides trained in nutrition can come to your student's home to demonstrate meal and shopping planning and cooking nutritious meals on a tight budget. Some Southeast Asian aides are available.

In any county, agents can be requested to lead a class, training or workshop in various agriculture or home economics-related areas. Be creative (and assertive when requesting assistance)! Get together with other tutors to plan a session that could provide not only lots of good English practice, but some basic survival information, too.

The Cooperative Extension offices are listed in the phone book under the County heading.

ANITA BELL



Associations

At the TESOL conference in Anaheim, I attended an interesting talk on memory by Earl Stevick. At the core of his discussion was a cryptic statement he often repeated: "hierarchical processes compete with each other at the same point in time (in our minds)." He elaborated by saying that as we learn new words and meanings we make associations to a variety of things which existed in the learning context. Thus, as we acquire an understanding (and memory) of something like "lamb," we associate the word to 'softness,' 'white,' 'furry,' the noise 'baa..,' 'four-legged,' etc. These associations are built up over time and differ from one individual to another. The person who grew up in the green hills of English sheep country will have different associations (richer?) to "lamb" than a person who grew up in an urban environment such as New York City. Our mind makes other associations as well. As we are acquiring new vocabulary (where we have not quite acquired "lamb" yet), we make associations (independent of meaning) between sound chunks of a word, as in 'l' associated to the sound 'a,' and 'a' associated to 'm,' 'm' associated to 'p' (as in previously acquired "lamp"), and so forth. In the early stages of acquisition, formerly learned associations may compete with developing associations to produce confused or inaccurate spoken attempts. Thus, when we see a 'lamb,' our mind may retrieve a collection of associationw which may result in slightly inaccurate productions, such as "lamp" for "lamb." Stevick's point is that it is important to present plenty of positive contexts for our students to experience new vocabulary and to develop multi-sensory associations to it.

Using Stevick's premise as a background, let's consider how we as teachers can work on associations. How do we relate one thing to another? What attributes do we use to organize things to another? What attributes do we use to organize things into groups? Lev Vygotsky, in his book Thought and Language, 1936, discussed several kinds of associations. We will briefly review some of them here.

We may group objects together that perform a similar function. "Car," "truck," and "bus" all are used for transportation, for example.

Objects may be associated to one another in a chain, "with meaning carried over from one link to another." A person may start with a blue box and associate other boxes of any color to it. He may then associate the color of the last box associated, (let's say yellow) to a yellow ball. To the ball he may next associate to half circles or rounded objects. In this kind of association there is no core concept, no attributes are shared by all objects: rather, it is merely a linking of one thing to another in a sequence.

The ability to abstract shared attributes from a group of objects is essential to making useful and meaningful associations. To illustrate, consider the group containing "apples," "bananas," "peas," "oranges," "cherries," and "grapefruit"--"peas" is the word that doesn't share the attribute of all the others (i.e. "peas" are not fruit).

There are many other kinds of associations, but for our purposes it is best to use our own imagination and construct some association groups. Looking at the lists below, see if you can find the single object in each group that does not share the attributes used to associate the rest of the objects to each other. Can you think of more groups?

In your class, be sure and use pictures and objects, instead of word lists, whenever appropriate. For lower level students, the concept of association is useful to establish a total context for vocabulary acquisition. For higher level students, have your students observe the association group (objects or pictures) and have them tell you how they are associated to one another and why something doesn't fit in. Experiment with the idea of associations--you will be addressing a function your students actively employ in acquiring and remembering new vocabulary.

ATTRIBUTES -- What doesn't fit?

water	column	sunset	basketball
cake	pipe	cherries	darts
glass	tube	apples	mitt
drinking	cube	lips	baseball
thirst	javelin	roses	puck
		parsley	

blouse	book	table	apples
vest	newspaper	couch	bananas
bonnet	magazine	chair	peas
blazer	journal	umbrella	oranges
boots	pamphlet	stool	cherries
	radio	lamp	grapefruit
		cabinet	

pen	bread
comb	milk
typewriter	meat
pencil	flour
quill	butter
	onions
	salt

- -

ANSWER KEY:

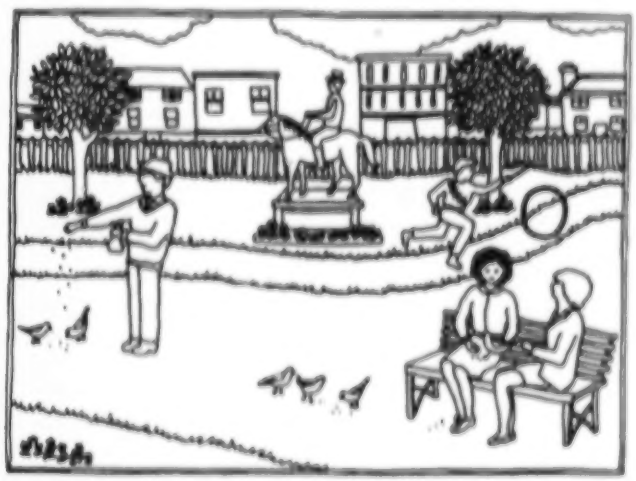
In each of the ten groups, all items except one share something in common:

1.	All related to drinking.	(except cake)
2.	All are cylindrical.	(except cube)
3.	All can be red.	(except parsley)
4.	All are sports objects.	(except mitt)
5.	All begin with the sound "b".	(except vest)
6.	All can be read.	(except radio)
7.	All are household items.	(except umbrella)
8.	All are fruit.	(except peas)
9.	All are writing tools.	(except comb)
10.	All are mass nouns.	(except onions)

PETER SKAER

Is There a Lesson on the Page?

You can review or introduce vocabulary, practice questions, and use a common grammatical structure with this activity. Find, or draw, a "busy" picture. The Cue Books have suitable ones for this activity, or many National Geographic or Life magazine pictures would also do.



Introduce the grammatical structure using known vocabulary.

T: There is a boy in a red shirt. (Student may point to picture.)

There is a cat on the roof.

There is a bridge over the river.

What else is there? (Point to something to elicit a noun.)

S: A tree.

T: There is a tree. (Student repeats.)

Where is the tree?

S: It's next to the house.

T: There is a tree next to the house. (Student repeats.)

And so on.

You may want to write all the elicited sentences down so that the student can study independently later.

The next time you use the picture (or a similar one), you can introduce the question forms.

T: Is there a woman in the car?

S: Yes, there is.

T: Are there cows in the swimming pool?

S: No, there aren't.

Use this question form to elicit language about the student's own experience.

T: Are there zoos in Vietnam?

Is there an employee lounge at your job?

Encourage the student to use the form to get information, too.

S: Is there a post office near here?

Is there a washing machine in the building?

Are there jobs for welders?

Once both the sentence and question stuctures are familiar, you can start plugging in new vocabulary.

T: There is an obnoxious neighbor in the condominium.

Help your student review the structure and vocabulary with a guessing game. The teacher has a picture which the student has not seen, and the student tries to guess what's in the picture.

S: Is there a fish?

T: No, there isn't.

More advanced students may use more than one question form during the game.

S: Is there a man?

T: Yes, there is.

S: Is he drinking?

T: No, he's not.

You may want to give your student clues about what to ask. This can lead into other sorts of guessing games, such as animal-vegetable-mineral or guessing the identity of objects in a bag.

Guessing games can be a fun way to inspire students to produce language. Reviewing the there-is/are structure with a guessing game is a good way to take the step from the concrete (the seen picture) to the abstract (retrieving the words from memory). Be sure to reverse the game sometimes and put yourself in the guesser's chair!

ANITA BELL

What Do You Value?

Here's a game for three or more people (include yourself in the count) that encourages discussion while reviewing vocabulary.

Cut up four times as many slips of paper as there are people in the group. On each slip of paper write a different word (the vocabulary to be reviewed). It works best if the words are all from the same category, for example, all food words, or possessions, or human qulities, or whatever you've been working on. Each person draws four slips of paper. Then among yourselves, barter away the items you don't want, to acquire the ones you do want. Give the group a time limit. At the end of the time, each person tells what she has, whether she is satisfied, why she values those items, and why she was willing to trade away the others.

Some sample word lists:

Personality Traits
- kindness
- honesty
- intelligence
- helpfulness
- wisdom
- health
- beauty
- strength
- sense of humor
- justice
- optimism
- spirituality

Quality of Life Issues
- full-time job
- part-time job
- health benefits
- good retirement benefits
- maternity leave
- day shift but lower pay
- night shift but higher pay
- good daycare for children
- bigger house
- large yard for garden and animals
- live in city
- live in country

ANITA BELL

No, This Isn't a Camera Advertisement...

But you can do a lot of lively tutoring activities using Polaroid photos. Is your student at the most basic level? Match a student's picture to her name card, a picture of her house to her address, and a picture of her talking on the phone can be matched to her written phone number. Later, you can use the same pictures in question and answer drills: Who is this? Where does she live? What's her phone number? Who lives here? What is she doing? Within a few weeks, your student will be able to say some sentences about each picture.

Take a few more pictures: different family members engaged in various activities, places your student goes, people she encounters. Once again, these can be used in the creation of questions, answers and sentences, either orally or written, depending on the student's level of ability. At a higher level, the student can make up a several-sentence story about each picture. You might take a series of pictures that illustrate a sequence, for example, your student teaching how to make a salad, or a field trip you take with your student to her child's school. These can then be used to reinforce vocabulary and practice related grammatical structures.

These are all typical activities that we do with commercial materials or magazine pictures, but the extra added interest of an instant, personal picture may add just the right amount of motivation to encourage your student into a little more language production.

ANITA BELL

Cardboard Characters

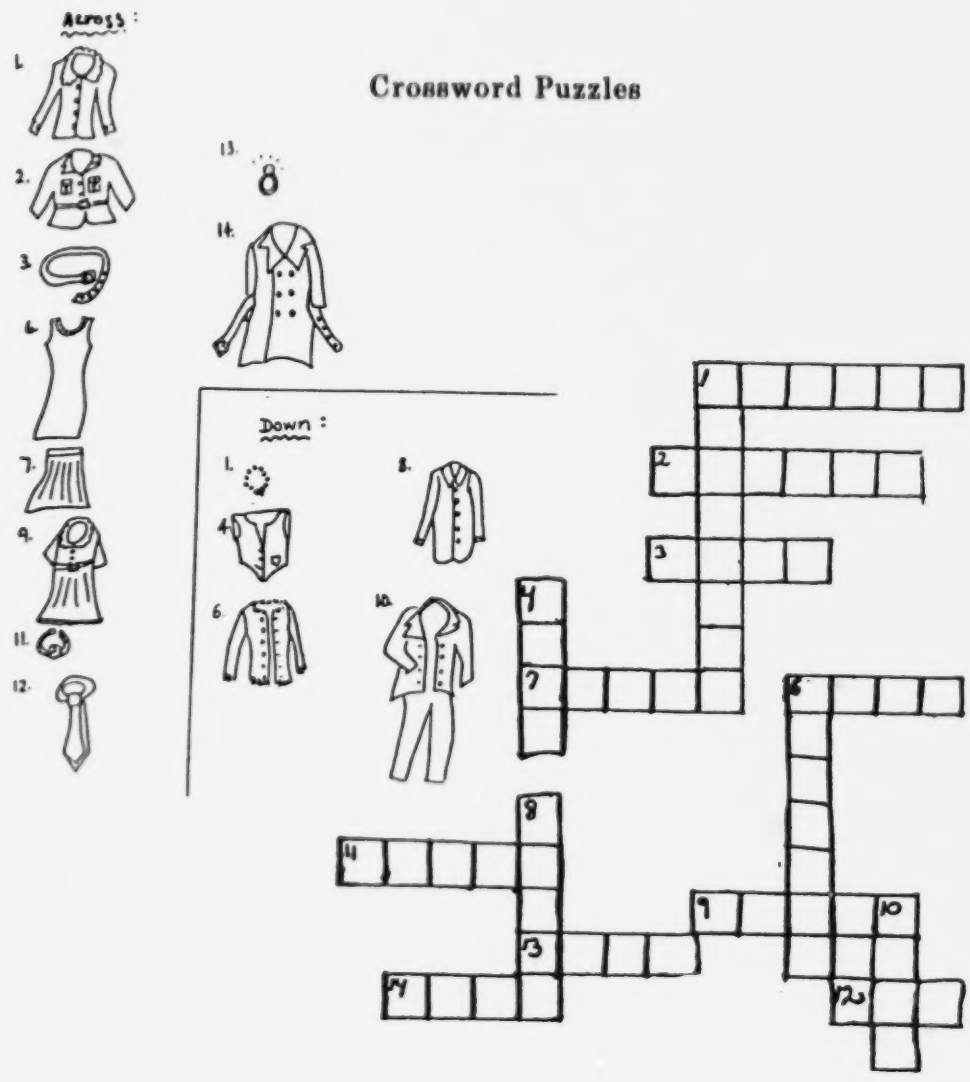
Some of you may remember Lucinda's "face cards" from her picture file. These would be great to inspire classroom skits. Choose magazine pictures of individuals displaying one or two interesting attributes - a hat, moustache, uniform, expression, etc. - and create characters with a job and certain personality traits. Give each student a picture. They are to assume the role of that character. Have pairs of "characters" meet in specific situations (on the bus, buying shoes, waiting for a job interview, etc.) and talk to each other.

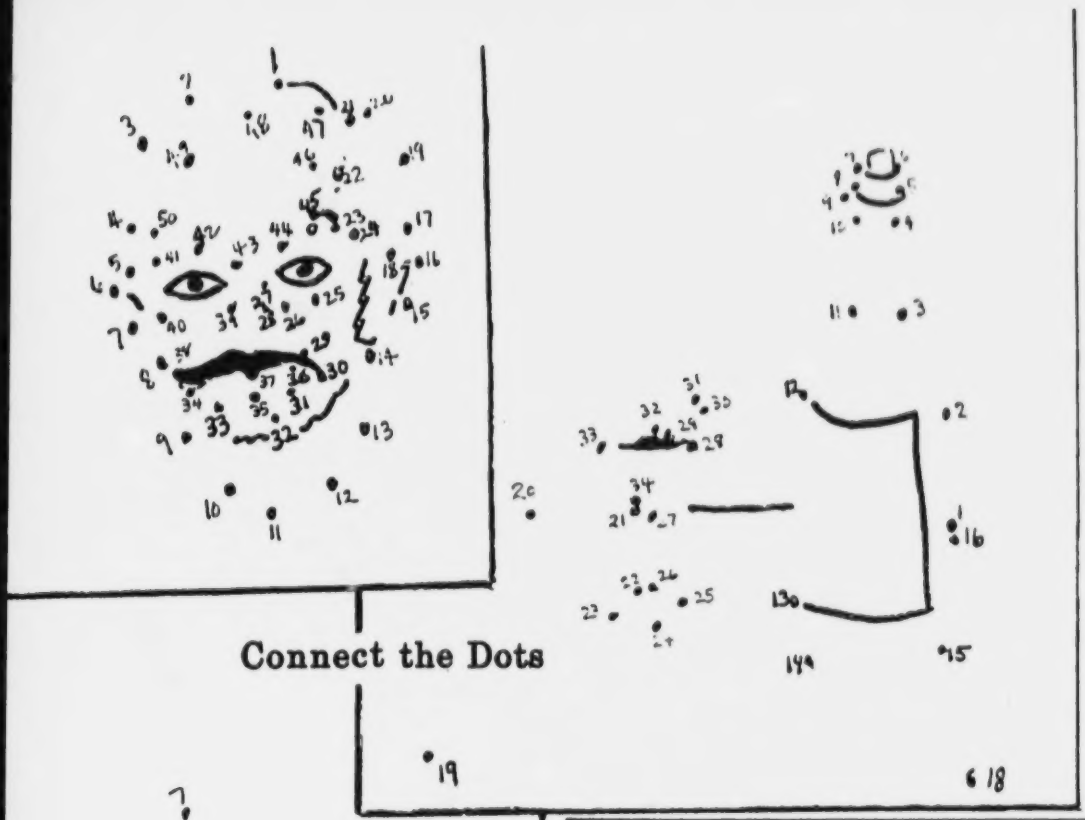
LUCINDA WINGARD

Do It Yourself Projects

Lily Der teaches ESL at the King Edward Campus of Vancouver Community College, B.C. (She has taught all levels and currently is working with pre-literate students. She enjoys designing materials specifically for each group of students. Her creativity is challenged by the students' needs, creating materials that satisfy both teacher and students.)

Crossword Puzzles





Connect the Dots

Match

DOWN

INFORMATION

OPEN

HOSPITAL

WOMEN

DANGER

STOP

OFF

NO SMOKING

EXIT

TALK TIME

Talk Time is a weekly conversation session, matching volunteers and newcomers to America. Limited English speakers can practice whatever English language they have with sympathetic listeners in a comfortable, non-threatening setting.

It's the perfect place to ask questions and share experiences. It's often the only place students can express spontaneous speech. Friendships are formed and cultures shared as both partners struggle to get their meanings across.

One Cambodian farmer explained Talk Time this way, "In school, the English is in my head. Here, it's in my mouth."

Most Talk Time activities can be adapted to individual or small-group tutoring sessions. Tutors already have an advantage over classroom teachers: students are generally more relaxed in the informal setting and their self-esteem is raised by the simple act of a volunteer coming to help them learn this mysterious new language. Tutoring sessions are a great opportunity for students to practice the social skills and conversational English that will ease their transition to the new culture.

Talk Time Around Washington

Since John Knox Presbyterian Church began holding Talk Time sessions in the early 1980's, the Talk Time concept has been successfully applied in a variety of settings and in several communities around the State, including Bellingham, Spokane, Olympia, Longview, Tacoma, and most recently at Renton Vocational and Technical Institute. Although individual programs vary, the principles of Talk Time remain the same for every program; students and volunteers meet in a relaxed and non-threatening environment for conversation. Correction of errors and "teaching" are kept to a minimum and students are allowed maximum opportunity to practice their English skills.

While some Talk Time programs, such as the one organized by Marilyn Reiman and Becky Knapp of the Washington Association of Churches in Spokane, operate successfully without the benefit of being attached to a regular classroom program, other programs seem to thrive on the built-in organization of the classroom schedule, where Talk Time activities are fitted into the schedule of classes. The advantages of working Talk Time into the classroom routine are the enlistment of the teacher of the class to help determine topics of conversation and activities for the group, and a guaranteed student turnout. Some programs which have not worked in the classroom setting in the past have had disappointing student participation, such that volunteers have frequently outnumbered students. A much happier situation occurs when a group of volunteers and a class of refugees become used to each other and see each other over a period of several weeks. This familiarity with one another, together with the confidence students feel in their own classroom, can result in good group rapport and stimulating Talk Time sessions.

Teri Tveten, the Volunteer Coordinator at TCH is one who strongly endorses the classroom approach to Talk Time, saying it is "clearly the best way to go. It provides direction and guidance for the Talk Time activities because they can be adapted from the regular lesson plans of the classroom teacher and can complement these plans." Teri also likes the fact that a Talk Time program not only benefits from the structure of a regular classroom, but also that the class benefits in turn from the energies of the volunteers, as students are able to interact with an interesting variety of native speakers.

One interesting recent development at TCH Talk Time sessions has been the involvement of Middle School children in special classroom Talk Time sessions. Students from a journalism at the Life Christian School, as well as a class from the Charles Wright Academy, have come in to work with the students in the P2 classes. The school children have developed their interviewing and conversation skills in the process of getting acquainted and talking with the refugees. Both sides clearly benefit from this sort of program, proof that something can be both educational and engrossing at the same time. One tangible result of this interaction will be the publication of the refugees' personal histories or life stories as told to the children in a student newspaper.

In order to orient the children to the challenge of communication with low-level refugee students, a new Talk Time training was developed by VTP trainers. In addition to providing a cultural orientation, this training was designed to involve the potential volunteers as much as possible in practice activities with the aim of making them aware of their questioning and listening skills.

The new training was recently taken to the site of Washington's newest Talk Time program at Renton Vocational and Technical Institute. Eight volunteers were trained, and met for the first time with a mixed B1/B2 class taught by Pat Dwyer. After two additional sessions, all eight volunteers are still committed to regular attendance, and Coordinator Donna Miller-Parker hopes to expand the program in the future.

CHRIS GILMAN

Really Going to Town!

Talk Time with ESL students of Seattle Central Community College has been going well, and I'd like to share a successful activity with other volunteers.

Last June we had a scavenger hunt, during which students visited various neighborhood businesses to request a pre-arranged specific item. It took an hour or two of preparation time for me to visit the businesses and arrange for item donations and sympathetic ears. Examples of items of the final list were:

-a piece of ribbon from a florist
-a hanger from a dry cleaners
-a coupon book from a restaurant
-an old newspaper from a bookstore

We even had bags donated from a grocery store for holding all the "loot." Each participant was sent out with a Talk Time Volunteer to help with the directions, but students had to ask on their own. They returned with bulging bags and fuller stomachs, since some of the donations were tasty edibles.

The activity is a good one for several reasons. The students had to communicate a specific request to English speakers. The community business workers became more aware of the refugee presence in the neighborhood. Students learned more about different kinds of area businesses. Community people were happy to help newcomers to America with their Englsih practice, and some wanted to get move involved with ESL volunteer work.

It's a good idea to thank those businesses who aided you in your scavenger hunt with a letter of recognition. Here's mine:

Thank you for participating in Talk Time's scavenger hunt this week. Your willingness to help new arrivals in America to practice their English and your generosity in donating an item to the hunt are greatly appreciated. Activities like this help to build good relationships between the business community and refugees who are learning about American life. Thank you again for your cooperation.

MAUREEN MCCOY
Talk Time Coordinator
Southeast Asian Refugee
Federation

Talk Time Scavenger Hunt Handout

Collect as many of these items as you can, and return to SCCC by 5:30. At specified businesses, identify yourself as a Talk Time student, and ask for the specified item.

From specific businesses

1800 block of Broadway
- from State Farm Insurance: a brochure on car insurance
- from Broadway cleaners: a hanger

100 block of East Broadway
- from Monterey Jack's Restaurant: a special coupon book

400 block of East Broadway
- from Winchell's Donut House: a donut hole (free!)
- from a Different Drummer bookstore: an old New York Times newspaper
- from Seattle Design Store: an address book (free!)

500 block of East Broadway
- from Lock and Safe Company: an old key

600 block of East Broadway
- from Penny Lane Records: a 45 record holder
- from Seattle Florist Shop: a piece of one-inch black ribbon
- from Skipper's Restaurant: a coupon (for free food)

From any business

- a movie schedule
- a packet of sugar
- a lottery computer card
- a napkin with the name of a business on it
- a free newspaper
- a bank deposit slip
- a menu

(Ed. Note: We encourage you not to use the same businesses listed above, everyone has limits to their generosity. We have listed them so that you may get an idea of the sort of places that might help you with your own scavenger hunt.)

A Pot-Pourri of Talk Time Activities

In Vancouver, Trish Jennings' Southeast Asian Refugee Center Talk Timers have been making kites - both Southeast Asian and American. Just in time for the windy days of March and April.

Tom Adams' Longview Community Church volunteer program provides a slightly different approach to Talk Time. Tom's Talk Time sessions have been on Friday night and have evolved into real social gatherings for the community. The last half of their Talk Time is devoted to singing songs - guided by Tom's fine guitar playing and singing abilities.

Bellingham's Whatcom County Literacy Council started a Talk Time in January of this year, and the program is thriving from all indications! Carol Henshaw and her group of Talk Timers also enjoy singing and listening to music. They all celebrated the Tet New Year (Vietnamese) by bringing in New Year's costumes and paraphernalia from many different countries. Other activities included a seeds and planting demonstration and a picture-taking session (where the photographs were developed and used the next week for conversation topics).

Anita Bell (Tacoma Community House) and her Talk Timers have tried a variety of activities. Most seasoned volunteers prefer to ignore the conversation questions and just settle in to friendly chatting. As a group, they enjoy occasional singing, group story-telling (about an interesting picture), and discussions about a shared videotape (Star Wars was popular!) or newspaper articles about refugee issues.

How They Do Talk Time in Bellingham

Carol Henshaw has been coordinating a Talk Time session in Bellingham since the beginning of the year. Her Talk Time program has been a resounding success and has continued to grow. Since the purpose of Talk Time is to encourage social participation in the community by giving refugees confidence in their conversation skills, Carol has developed many non-teaching activities. Most of the activities are thematic or topical - providing a foundation upon which Talk Time partners can build a conversation.

For building community familiarity, Carol decided to have refugees and volunteers visit various local shops in pairs. She first checked with several shops to see if they had anything that they could give away for free. She found that shops had a variety of things, including paper bags with the shop logo, various brochures and schedules, menus, coupons and other miscellaneous items. Carol then made up a list of destinations and items which could be obtained at each place and sent the Talk Timers out into the neighborhood, complete with maps, to investigate the community. In some cases, participants were asked to simply find the prices of various items and then compare between stores in order to determine the best bargain.

At the next Talk Time session, everyone gathered at Carol's house to show the items that had been collected and to report on what had transpired in their community travels. Prompting questions included:

1. Name the things that we have done.
2. What colors did you see?
3. What words did you hear?
4. What do you like about what we did?
5. What is one thing you didn't like?
6. What will you do next time?

The Talk Time approach is successful for all levels of students. The lower level students benefit by exposure to the community, exposure to new people, new words and new sights. For them, it is enough to report, "I saw many red flowers," or "I walk to store." For more advanced students, reportings can become comparisons of where to go for one thing or another, and where you can find the best deal, and so forth. All in all, Carol's Talk Time is exciting and appealing: students gain familiarity with their community, they get a chance to practice spontaneous and elaborative conversation skills, and they are dealing with immediate and relevant needs.

The Student as Sculptor

Teri, the Volunteer Coordinator at TCH, likes to use modelling clay in working with her students. Last week she brought in several colors of modelling clay and had the students make animals from their countries. She was interested in teaching them to follow and describe a process in the class, but the animal sculptures also had great potential for Talk Time conversation pieces.

The results of the student's work with the clay were astounding. One man made a tiger out of orange clay and overlaid it with black stripes. He then fashioned extremely thin black strips and fixed them around the tiger's mouth for whiskers. For the finishing touch, he made a large black fish and put it in the tiger's mouth. Another student made a pair of draft animals (cows) complete with a yoke, a plow, and a farmer. Another fabricated a water buffalo feeding on a miniature rice paddy which the student represented as individual rice shoots of green clay growing out of a white paddy. Lots of imagination and effort also went into the various snakes, giraffes, pigs, dogs, and birds created by the rest of the students. The students knew the clay sculpture was good, and their pride of accomplishment and interest in the creations of their classmates were more than enough to insure a good Talk Time conversation.

The topic for the day, of course, was animals. I had a list of questions, blank paper, crayons, pencils, and the usual stack of National Geographics at hand, but most of the hour was devoted to discussion of the clay animals made by the class. Two of the men in my discussion group had been farmers in Cambodia and the third, a Vietnamese city dweller, was also knowledgable of farming practices. One of the Cambodian farmers was particularly moved to speak by the plow and the draft animals. He still had strong feelings for his old draft animals back in Cambodia and talked at length about the care and feeding of cows and how much he liked them. At one point he stood and demonstrated the movements and noises a Cambodian farmer makes to get the cows to move forward and to stop. For a moment it was easy to see him as he had been in the fields, working with his animals. The Vietnamese student was busy meanwhile sketching a picture of a water buffalo hooked up to a kind of mill which turned sugar cane into sugar. He and the Cambodians discussed this process in English, and then, because I couldn't quite understand it, they did their best collectively to explain it to me.

Thanks to Teri's preparation, it was a very productive and enjoyable Talk Time.

CHRIS GILMAN

Clay for the Classroom

If you are interested in making modelling clay for classroom activities with your student, here are a couple of recipes.

Recipe #1

1 1/2 cups flour	1/2 cup salt
1/2 cup water	1/4 cup vegetable oil

Mix flour and salt. Slowly add water and oil. Food coloring is optional. Be sure to refrigerate when not in use.

Recipe #2

2 cups flour	1 cup salt
2 tbls. alum	2 cups boiling water
2 tbls. oil	

Mix flour, salt, and alum and add 2 tbls. of oil and 2 cups of boiling water. (This recipe makes for a smoother and more elastic clay, and does not need to be refrigerated.)

Stories from Words

Make small groups (3-5 people) equally balanced between Americans and refugees. Give each group a different list of eight words in the following categories. We've included some examples, but make up your own to suit your situation. If your group is made up of mostly beginners, you'll want to use the simpler items.

fruit: apple, salmonberry, Oregon grape, plum, kiwi
animal: cat, possom, rattlesnake, goose, big foot
occupation: doctor, logger, policeman, bag lady, stevedore
shape: square, triangle, figure eight, pie-shaped, amorphous
food: spaghetti, steak, potluck, sloppy joes, munchies
time: yesterday, weekend, fortnight, once in a blue moon, month of Sundays, any day now, seasons
relationship: sister, stepson, second cousin, shirt-tail kin
color: blue, orange, teal, burgundy, fluorescent orange

From the list of eight words, each group must work together to write or tell a STORY. The stories can be any length, but usually they will be 8-16 sentences long: the more advanced the students, the more sentences. Remember: these are <u>stories</u> you're writing (or telling). Each sentence should be related to the story's plot. To help get the vocabulary across, you'll probably want to draw pictures, so bring some butcher paper along to draw on. Also, bring a tape recorder, so you can record the refugee members telling their group's story. They're thrilled to hear their voices on tape! This activity can be used with any level student. Kids love it! The students learn lots of vocabulary and get to practice their conversational skills during the story-writing process. You can recycle this activity by changing the categories or by changing the vocabulary. Have fun!

FROM A TUTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Tutoring in Birmingham, England

"Salaar alaikum."

"Alaika salaam. -- Come in. Come in."

Rashid leads down the corridor to the sitting room.

I glance around and notice that the room is especially neat and the furniture is rearranged. "Something's up," I think to myself. I remove my coat, hat, scarf and gloves. A cold day outside, but toasty in here.

"How are you?" I twinkle at Nasreen. She predictably blushes and puts her face into her hands. She came here only last month from Pakistan to marry Rashid's relative. Unlike Rashid, she has been to school and writes her numbers and letters well, but I haven't got her to say much yet.

Rashid's 2-year-old boy makes advances while the 3-year-old girl takes up her usual position in a corner chair and the 1-year-old unsteadily progresses along the couch. I dig into my bag to glance over my lesson plan... Oh yes, talking about birthdays may draw out some information I need. But there's a knock and Jannet and her beautiful curly-haird 3-year-old arrive. No baby today. Another knock and Mumtag arrives. A full class. But again a knock and another woman arrives with a baby. I sit still while waves of Urdu lap back and forth in the room.

I ask for homework and each woman proudly presents her completed paper. Only Rashid has had trouble with her letters. "Good, good." It's already 20 after, better get to the review. Days of the week. After. Before. Then try a chain drill.

"I get up at 7:00. When do you get up?... She gets up at 6:30." Things bog down when we get to Nasreen. The phone rings and Rashid is gone. The new woman takes part and I ask her name. More daily activities....

I open my bag again and start bringing out my materials. The children crowd around the low coffee table in anticipation: match box, soap, toothbrush, a can of soup, flour and tea. We're going to go shopping and make change. Again a knock. Rashid ushers in a suited white man. We try to drill a previous dialogue while over our heads Rashid discusses wiring and helps the man with his tape measure. They go to the other rooms. Her English is quite useful, having been here 10 years, if not grammatically complete.

Well--all we have left to use for the the new dialogue is the can of soup and packet of flour--unless we want to put up with piercing wails of deprived infants. But this time I've kept all the change in a purse rather than spread on the table. So our buying and selling starts. Another knock. Two women and 4 or 5 children enter and greet Nasreen ceremoniously. Hmm. Am I in the middle of something? I forge on. The newcomers sit down and watch.

Jannet, Mumtag and the new student--are following the new dialogue in A New Start. They all seem to have some reading skills. Nasreen, who had been speaking out, at least when asked to repeat, has gone into her shy mode again--I can't pry a word out of her. Who are her visitors?

Rashid returns and the man leaves, but soon her husband enters. The lesson pauses while a loud discussion ensues. Doesn't seem angry. Doesn't seem bad news. Just sounds important. The other ladies and I shrug and smile. Time to go and I start packing: books, activity cards, pocket chart, groceries--all into my bag for my bus trip home. I ask the new student to spell her name for me--Naheed Saddiq. Hmm. I'm getting better--got to pick up another book for her. I give her a blank exercise book like the others' and she looks pleased. Rashid looks doubtful.

"What homework?"

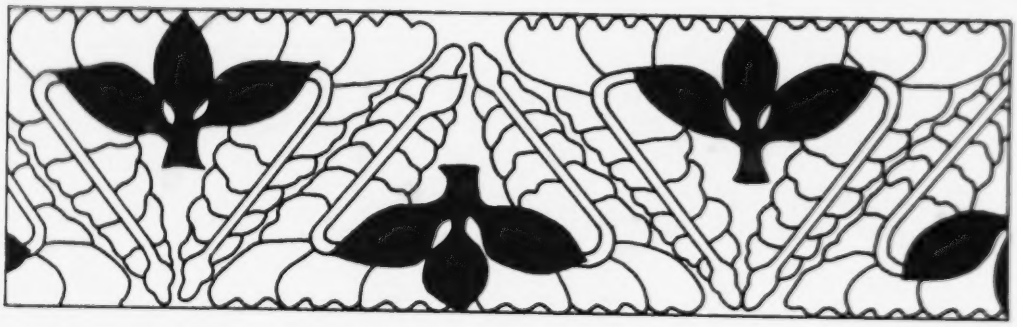
"Do you want homework?"

"Yes, yes."

Lucky me. I had just stopped at Naseby Centre and picked up some worksheets. We discussed how to fill in the blanks. Everyone seemed satisfied.

Hat, coat, scarf, gloves. "Kuddafis. Good-bye. See you Monday." What do people think as they see me walking along with such a silly grin on my face?

LUCINDA WINGARD



Tutoring Leads to Friendship

I first met Anh in Lois Rosen's class. (I helped him with his English twice a week. However, it was the end of the spring quarter, summer was approaching, and classes were soon to end.) And after only two or three sessions I invited him to our home for dinner. I had figured I would meet some resistance, but Anh's frankness surprised me. He readily admitted that he felt afraid to come. "What if your husband can't understand my English?", etc. So we talked about his anxieties and I suggested that he invite another friend to join him. And, luckily for us, he invited two and we ended up with not one friend, but three.

The "original meal" was funny in retrospect. Anh, who had worried about his English, never stopped talking the whole evening! I served quiche, broccoli, muffins and fruit salad--very strange food to them. I'm afraid they didn't like it, but they were very polite. They treated us to roller skating afterwards ("to thank you for dinner"). (Anh had never skated, Kelly, Hoan and I were rank amateurs at best and Tam was a star, skating backwards and making fancy turns and circles.) You needed a partner for the final skate, so Hoan and Tam invited two teenage Russian girls to join them--and they accepted! And despite the fact that in the last ten minutes of skating, Anh took a fall, I fell on top of him, Hoan fell on top of me and I had a black and blue mark on my knee for a week and could hardly walk, I had a great time!

Since then we've done so much that it would be impossible for me to recall it all on paper. They drop by when they're in the neighborhood, call on the phone, visit Kelly at Highland and often come by the Salem Library where I work (sometimes to say hello, sometimes to check out books).

There are so many good memories: celebrating (Anh's and Hoan's) birthdays (in June and November), going to the movies ("Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom", "The Natural" and "The Karate Kid"), their first American meal in a restaurant that wasn't fast (Los Chiles), bowling (We were terrible! But now they go on their own and teach their friends.), their bringing us a present at Thanksgiving ("to thank you for friendship"), the fresh strawberries they brought us all summer, and celebrating Christmas. I especially remember going to Portland together because we spent the hour talking about our cultural differences. They explained so much to us that helped us understand what had always seemed before to be puzzling behavior. That day we went to the zoo, took the train to Washington Park, rode the carousel, went to a crafts show, had dinner at Vietnam's Pearl and ended the evening in a Vietnamese food store. What an experience! Tam, Hoan and Anh bought us all kinds of unrecognizable food and insisted we try it on the drive home. I understood then, how they feel having to eat food that is not even similar to what they're used to.

I have felt especially close to them when they have described what it was like to escape Vietnam, what the refugee camp in Malaysia was like, their feelings about being separated from their families, their aspirations for the future. Both Kelly and I feel honored to have these three men as our friends (actually four now. We have a new friend, Chy (Vo Chy Dinh), introduced to us by Anh, Hoan and Tam). And we are especially grateful to you, Sara, who started it all!

BRENDA LAWRENCE
Chemeketa Community College

Reading, Writing, and Realia

When I began tutoring, my two students seemed somewhat unconvinced that this weekly experience would get them anywhere, and they were both very hesitant about their English. One student is from Kampuchea, the other from Ethiopia. (I meet them individually.)

I've been making up activities to build their confidence, and to show them how much they do, in fact, know. After I brought in pictures of my family, they both told me about theirs. Each week, I bring them a one page, typed story (as simple as possible) about what they've told me, or what we've done the week before. I gave them 3-ring notebooks to keep these pages in, and I date each story. (We talk about this, reinforcing calendar words like "this week," "last week," "Tuesday," etc.) Transforming their stories, families and lives into typed English is hopefully a way for me to say two things: "Look at all you've told me, look at all we've communicated," and "Words and books come from people." Their needs are different, since my Ethiopian student, Abebech is experiencing her first written language, whereas Sinh is literate in Mandarin Chinese and Khmer. I've begun including blanks in the stories, for them to fill in. If I mention a daughter or friend of theirs, for instance, I'll include a blank for that person's name. Abebech will say the name, and we'll sound it out together, figuring out an English spelling. Sinh writes in the Chinese characters of the name, and she's also bugun making Chinese notes on other words in the stories.

In addition, I bring in objects that I think will mean something to them. Since Sinh works as a seamstress, my sewing box has provided lots of vocabulary work. She is eager to bring in samples of cloth and thread from her job, and to have me tell her the names of things--she knows that she needs this English, and that I can help her get it.

LAURA KELSEY
SEARF

Could You Repeat That, Please?

Good grief! Do you realize that:

- We speak at about 125 words a minute.
- We think at about 500 words a minute.
- We forget over half of everything we hear right after hearing it.
- We forget from 80% to 90% of everything we hear within a week.
- Over 75% of everything we learn is from listening.
- Three-fourths of everything we learn is almost entirely forgotten within a week. The 10% or 20% left over is what we keep as "learning."
- We spend about 80% of our waking hours communicating.

VOLUNTEER QUARTERLY, 1985

Gabby Advises

Dear Gabby,

I have been tutoring my student for five months now. Classes are coming along fine, but I do have a problem.

For the past few weeks, when I arrive for class, my student has prepared something for me to eat. It's not that the food isn't good, or that I don't like it, but I really feel obligated to eat it and usually at that time I am not even hungry. I feel uncomfortable too because she justs sits and watches me eat. Besides I know she doesn't have very much money for all this food.

Concerned in Colfax

Dear Concerned,

You are appreciated. Your student wants you to feel welcome and comfortable. In my travels I learned that the more accepted, the more I was offered. I learned to do what the natives did. Slow down, take a taste to show respect and let the rest take care of itself. If hungry, eat. If not, be gracious: give thanks but don't feel obliged to eat.

P.S. You might try having your lessons away from the table...

A Tidy Tip from Lucinda

If your student tends to lose some of your carefully prepared worksheets and other ESL materials, or if small fingers tend to smear and wrinkle them in strategic places....consider giving your student a large manila envelope (a used one does just fine) to keep all her ESL materials. Pasting on a bright picture will make it easy to find on lesson days.

Teen Talk Time at TCH

Visiting the Community House has taught me a lot about the skills of communication. Also, I have learned much about other cultures. I realize now how much Cambodians value their freedom. It taught me to understand these people better, and the hardships they suffered. I know now how hard it is for them to adjust to our standards in the U.S. I really like the Community House because it gave me an opportunity to meet other people from this world.

CHARLES WRIGHT ACADEMY STUDENTS
Tacoma Community House Talk Time

Drawing the Line

Have you ever felt "hooked" into helping with your student's problems? Or, have you been faced with a student's problem and felt unprepared or unwilling to get involved? Establishing where that line between tutoring and counseling is, and then determining our limits as a counselor, can spare us some emotional wear and tear.

Our students like everyone else, have a set of problems they deal with every day. Tutors using the Language Experience Approach and/or Freire's problem posing techniques encourage their students to communicate their immediate experiences, feelings and thoughts, but using this content for ESL lessons risks opening Pandora's box. Over the years, volunteer ESL tutors have performed very well in these situations, but not without some feelings of inadequacy and guilt. From a workshop I attended called "Exploring the Boundary: Where Teaching Stops and Counseling Begins" by Dina DuBois, former teacher and presently a counselor, come the following task and list of guidelines.

First, the Adult Basic Education and ESL teachers wrote down what we believed our mission to be. Try making a list for yourself: "My job mandate as an ESL tutor is...." Then we shared our list with 6 or 7 other teachers and discovered that we each had slightly different priorities and boundaries for our teaching role. "Drawing the line" came at different places for each of us. After discussion we were given the chance to revise our personal list while recognizing how valid it is for teachers to be different. It's no wonder teachers feel doubts or guilt in situations where we stretch our personal boundaries and assume an unaccustomed role.

From a workshop handout I adapted the following list of communication strategies for volunteers to consider.

Counseling Skills an ESL tutor might use:

LISTENING -- Allowing the student to disclose at his own pace. Not assuming unspoken facts nor that the student is asking for your help. "Listen at the speed at which the person talks."
PROBING -- Asking questions that get the student to be concrete about the problem and that encourage him to explore resources that are available.
RESPONDING -- Showing respect for your student's experiences, feelings and thoughts. Reflecting back to the student what you hear him say. Sharing personal experiences that are similar or describing a third-person story that helps clarify the problem.
INFORMATION GIVING -- Identifying exactly what information the student needs. Helping the student discover potential resources. Sharing information you have. Clarifying any incorrect information.

Counseling Techniques that are inappropriate for ESL tutoring:

INTERPRETING -- Filling in the blanks, that is, getting to the central problem before the student can identify it for himself.
EVALUATING -- Judging the goodness or appropriateness of the student's acts, feelings or thoughts.
GOAL SETTING -- Showing the student a "realistic" direction for his life.
ACTION PLANNING -- Guiding the student's choices by predicting difficulties and evaluating his progress.

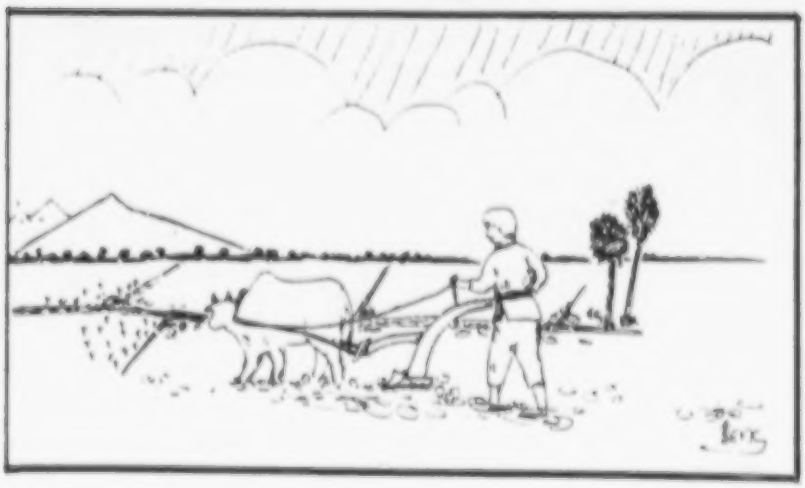
Conscious guidelines for how we will react, consistent with helping our students become self-reliant, may help us act appropriately with less discomfort when students bring a problem to class and we feel "hooked".

LUCINDA WINGARD
Tacoma Community House

Talk Time Experience

Although I was there to teach Cambodians English I felt I learned more about Cambodia and Cambodians than I could ever have taught. I came at first arrogant and cocky and left with feeling and understanding. I exchanged interesting stories, conversed in Cambodian, French, Spanish and English, and got a feel for the terror, horror, and fear these people went through. From only the short, limited hours I spent with these people they became more than just students but friends. I feel this is a worthwhile project that can only be benefited from.

INGRID WIESE, Charles Wright Academy
Student and TCH Talk Time Participant



What Really Happened?

Every tutor knows how quickly a sick baby or a telephone bill for $150 can make our lesson plan and specially made flash cards moot. "Expecting the unexpected" should be the volunteer tutor's motto.

Other times our plans go so smoothly we whip through the activities with half an hour to spare. When that happened to me one day while tutoring my group of Kashmiri women, I desperately patched together 10 minutes more of review. Then silence reigned....I noticed Rashid was struggling with a thought. A long minute passed. She finally stammered something that communicated, "Teacher, how much do they pay you to come here?" A very fruitful discussion followed. Silence can be productive!

The following is a record of one day of my tutoring efforts in Saltley, Birmingham:

Time		Materials needed
5	WARM-UP greetings + the weather	–

As soon as I walked in the door, Rashid adjusted her head scarf and headed for the door. We went through a "good-bye" dialogue..."See you Wednesday."

Weather cooperated--sunny yesterday, foggy and cold today.

10	REVIEW 1. Counting change 2. making change from £1	coins £ notes

Nasreen was taking much too long and thinking too hard to really call this review. I gave her several more groups of coins to practice with. 15 minutes.

15	LEARNING POINT everyday activities — changing to yesterday ACTIVITIES 1. orally describe pictures 2. students tell I cook, ate 3. transform to -ed Samsy - cue w/ pictures "I ___ ed"	A New Start: "Samsy's day"

Nasreen recognized each picture and initiated the correct verb. We practiced each in a sentence. Left it there to keep things positive.

10	BREAK (pacify children)

We often "get broken" by the children's demands for attention, so I don't ususally plan a break. This time no children so we talked about why Rashid left.

5 PRONUNCIATION EXERCISE six, sixth, etc

Nasreen didn't understand the meaning distinction, but can produce the pairs. Jannet is curious about the distinction which leads to the next learning point.

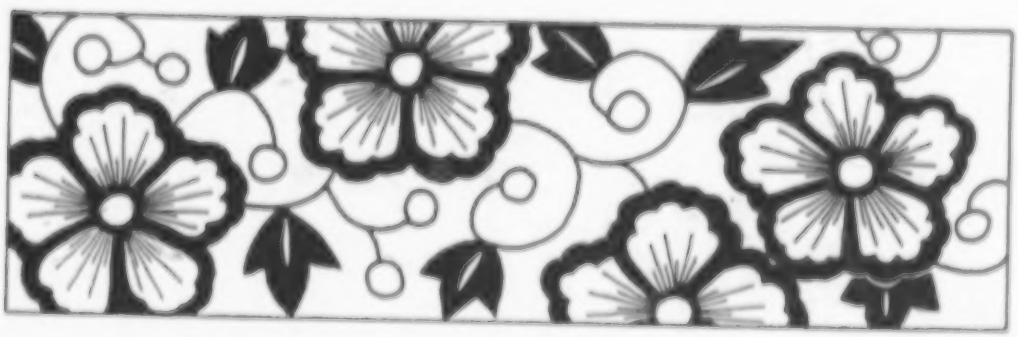
10 LEARNING POINT reading calendar
making appointments

ACTIVITIES 1. TPR w/ calendar ("show me the 25th ... yesterday ... etc") — calendar page of this month
2. Q-A "What's the date?"
3. Conversation: When were you born? When did you come to England? When did you marry? etc.

5 CLOSING number + date dictation

A bit of serendipity. Rashid had left for a doctor's appointment. Discussed her past and future appointments. Nasreen also had had an appointment 2 weeks ago and discovered she was pregnant. We found the date when her baby is due. TPR O.K. Q-A, forget it. Nasreen clammed up. So we got out her favorite flash cards--body parts cut from a catalog--and she proudly identified each one. She's been studying! Good place to finish. We said "good-bye" in Urdu.

LUCINDA WINGARD



A Crisis in Confidence

A volunteer I trained and then placed with a group of homebound women came in to visit the other day. He was one of our very reliable and independent volunteers, but he was dissatisfied with his efforts and felt that his students, too, were discouraged.

His students had lots of vocabulary words, but they couldn't use them in sentences. He found himself explaining a lot about American life, but not eliciting much language from the women. He felt elementary arithmetic was essential for their survival in the U.S., but they indicated they didn't want to try it.

Tutors, myself included, often find ourselves overwhelmed by what their students, especially those who have had little previous schooling, don't understand about the world around them. We are tempted to try and make it all clear to them, the quicker the better. This makes the 2-3 tutoring hours the newcomers have per week very intense. It makes them painfully aware of all that they do not know and they gain little sense of progress. The tutor wanted advice on how to change this.

We worked out a detailed "plan of attack" for his lessons. First, the students would be given time to identify what they already know very well--money, time, body parts, etc. Next, he would review another past lesson, one he planned to build on when he introduced something new.

Then we discussed how to choose what new topic material to bring up. As we talked, he told me what he had learned about his students' lives and aspirations. We made a short list of language objectives for the next several months of teaching: finding and shopping for bargains, talking to the doctor about their children's ailments, and dealing with a neighbor who was intimidating them. The Language Experience Approach of attaching new language to the students' everyday experiences is a dependable guide for tutors, but needs to be limited and taken one small step at a time. The temptation to expand from calling the police to civil rights and our court system needs to be resisted when the students can't yet answer, "What happened?"

Then we got down to the practical problem of getting more than monosyllables from the students and how to use written cues from basically illiterate students. My usual procedure is to feed and maneuver my students into producing a complete sentence (e.g. "This whole chicken is $3.12."). Writing it down keeps me from going too fast or lapsing into language equivalents ("What's the price?") that they can't yet understand. I write the simple sentences large on lined paper (which I'll eventually cut or tear into segments for cues, sight reading and new sentences.) With only one more answer and question set, they have a "dialog" they can practice without me. With a few props (canned food, etc.) a roleplay can develop.

Written cues can be used to prompt my students so I can avoid saying the words for them. However, ultimately I want them to recreate in their own heads an appropriate question or response. I prevent them from merely reading aloud by taking away more and more key words while adding a few possible variations.

I reminded the tutor of Total Physical Response from training. He said that using TPR was a successful part of his lessons and planned to think up new commands to use with his standard ones. Experience shows how carefully planned TPR work needs to be.

We then took up the issue of literacy for his students. It is tricky for the homebound Cambodian women. Literacy requires a second major effort--after that of speaking English--that not all students will feel capable of making. But this tutor discovered his students really wanted to fill out the application forms they are often faced with. Taken in small, logical steps this, in itself, would be another 3-6 month project.

Armed with the plans we made, the tutor said he was ready to try again. I assured him that all of us who have tutored share similar experiences.

LUCINDA WINGARD

An Encounter with Another Culture

I arrived at a tan, house-like structure. It was cold and wet. I left the school van to be greeted by an assistant at the refugee center. We all filed in around a table unaware of what we would be doing. We were told that we will converse with people from Southeast Asia. People who knew nothing of us and people we knew nothing of. I admit I was scared. I didn't know what to think. I had many fears.

Soon I met Heu. He was a male about twenty-five years old. I introduced myself and told him why we were there. He seemed very pleasant. He smiled a lot as though his life had been complete and uncomplicated. As we talked he began to tell me of his escape from Cambodia. He said that he escaped by bicycle to Thailand. I think he said this, but, because of his lack of knowledge in the English language, he may have mixed up his language. I found that in Cambodia he had eight brothers and sisters. Today, he said, he had three. I tried not to go into details right away about loss of family, but he expressed that his father and sister were in a refugee camp in Thailand awaiting to enter the U.S. He said he really missed them.

In Thailand, he stayed in a camp. Here, he said, there was plenty of food for him. The real reason for leaving Cambodia was for the lack of food. Bombing by the U.S. prevented abundant food supply. Heu was a farmer and he plowed the fields. He went to work to keep the family alive. I asked him about sports and he said that he didn't like them because he is very "weak." I was not able to talk to him very well the first time, but soon I am sure we will begin to talk.

I learned yesterday to look past politics. Before yesterday he and his countrymen were just numbers to me. These people are interesting and they have a statement to make to all of us. It is not to take for granted what you have. I haven't had to leave my family behind or a country I loved for freedom. He told me how he couldn't wait to enter the United States. I think people like Heu are this nation's greatest patriots. They are very similar to this nation's patriots in 1776 coming from Europe. They had a dream and I have a new respect for Southeast Asians. Lord, give me the patriotism to my country and to You like these people. This was definitely a learning experience I am looking forward to repeating.

DARIN PARDUR
Life Christian School

Something to Think About

DO WHAT A TUTOR EXPECTS AND WHAT THE STUDENT EXPECTS ALWAYS MATCH UP?

TUTOR
"I can't be a teacher. Teachers are bossy and know a lot."
"My teaching experience in Africa will be useful. Discipline - that's what we need."
"My Linguaphone French course was very successful. Practise makes perfect after all!"
"Perhaps later on when we know each other better, she can visit me and I can introduce her to my friends."
"The Organiser said he speaks hardly any English. How on earth does he cope? Poor chap."
LEARNER
"I want to learn grammar."
"I hope she's not like the teachers in my school. I wonder if she will be my friend." (wistful)
"I'm too busy to do this really, but I'd better let her come."
"I'd like to be able to say Hello to the neighbours - I don't see anyone else anyway."
"I've mananged for two years."

From the new HOME TUTOR KIT produced by NATESLA in Coventry, England.

THE STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

Planning for the Future

If your plan is for one year,
plant rice;
If your plan is for ten years,
plant trees;
If your plan is for a hundred years,
educate men and women.

- From the sayings of KUAN TYU

Teacher, It's Nice to Meet You, Too

Hello! I'm one of the 20 students in your class. I come everyday. I sit here and I smile and I laugh and I try to talk your English which you always say will be "my" language.

As I sit here I wonder if you, my teacher, are able to tell when I am sinking in spirit and ready to quit this incredible task. I walked a thousand miles, dear teacher, before I met you. Sitting here, listening to you and struggling to hold this pencil seems to be my "present." I want to tell you though that I, too, am a person of the past.

When I say my name is Sombath I want to tell you also that back in my village, I had a mind of my own. I could reason. I could argue. I could lead. My neighbors respected me. There was much value to my name, teacher, no matter how strange it may sound to your ears.

You ask, "Where are you from?" I was born in a land of fields and rivers and hills where people lived in a rich tradition of life and oneness. My heart overflows with pride and possession of that beautiful land, that place of my ancestors. Yet, with all this that I want to share with you, all that I can mutter is I came from Cambodia. I'm Khmer. I'm not even sure I can say these words right or make you understand that inside, I know what you are asking.

"How old are you?" I want to cry and laugh whenever you go around asking that. I want so very much to say, I'm old, older than all the dying races I have left behind, older than the hungry hands I have closed my ears to, older than the world, maybe. And certainly much older than you. Help me, teacher, I have yet to know the days of the week or the twelve months of the year.

Now I see you smiling. I know you are thinking of my groans and sighs whenever I have to say "house" and it comes out "how" instead. I think many times, that maybe I was born with the wrong tongue and the wrong set of teeth. Back in my village, I was smarter than most of my neighbors. Teacher, I tremble with fear now over words like "chicken" and "kitchen."

Now you laugh. I know why. I do not make sense with the few English words I try to say. I seem like a child because I only say childlike things in your English. But I am an adult, and I know much that I cannot yet express. This I think is funny and sad at the same time. Many times the confusion is painful. But do not feel sad, dear teacher. I wish very much to learn all the things that you are offering me, to keep them in my heart, and to make them a part of me. However, there was this life I have lived through and now the thoughts of days I have yet to face. Between my efforts to say "How are you?" and "I am fine, thank you" come uncontrollable emotions of loneliness, anger, and uncertainty. So have patience with me, my teacher, when you see me sulking and frowning, looking outside the classroom or near to crying.

Please go on with your enthusiasm, your eagerness, and your high spirit. Deep inside me, I am moved that someone will still give me so much importance. Keep that smile when I keep forgetting the words you taught me yesterday and cannot remember those I learned last week.

Give me a gentle voice to ease the frustration, humiliation, and shame when I just cannot communicate "refrigerator," "emergency," or "appointment." For you, my teacher, they are little words, but for me they are like monsters to fight. Pat me on the shoulder once in a while and help my tense body and trembling hands to write A B C and 1 2 3.

Continue to reward me with a warm "good" or "very good" when I have finally pronounced "church" correctly after one hundred "shurshes."

I am one of the students in your class. I came today and tomorrow I will come again. I smile and laugh and try to talk your English which you say will become my language.

RUBY IBANEZ
Philippine Processing Center

Buddhism Explained

Sometimes our non-Buddhist friends may ask us to explain something about our religion, such as the meaning of the chants we recite at the temple. Often we do not have the words to describe these things in English. The following is a translation and explanation of one of our most important chants - The Three Refuges.

Buddham Saranam Gacchami
To the Buddha I go for Refuge

Dhammam Saranam Gacchami
To the Dhamma I go for Refuge

Sangham Saranam Gacchami
To the Sangha I go for Refuge

(This is repeated three times.)

Pali is the ancient language of Buddhism, similar to what Latin is for Roman Catholics. It is no longer used in everyday conversation, but remains the vehicle for transmission of the teachings of the Buddha in the Theravada (Teachings of the Elders) countries.

When we say that we go to the Buddha for refuge it does not mean that we expect the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, to help us. It means that we look to his enlightenment as an example of what we must achieve for ourselves. We look to him to inspire us on our own path in life.

Dhamma means many things, including truth and teachings. By taking refuge in the Dhamma, we are placing our confidence in the highest truths or laws of the Universe.

Sangha means the community of monks, nuns, and devout lay people. By taking refuge in the Sangha, we are recognizing the importance of the mutual support that all people who seek the truth provide for each other.

The Dhamma explains the truth, the Buddha stands as an example that it is possible for us to understand it completely, and the Sangha is there to help us on our journey toward peace.

SEMEY TMAY
New Times, Spring 1986

Experience Stories

A few months ago I started teaching a class of three intermediate level students - one Cambodian woman, a Vietnamese man, and a Laotion man. They could all read and spell English quite well but primarily needed and wanted to improve their spoken English.

In order to get a better understanding of their capabilities I used a method familiar to many primary school teachers - writing "experience stories." As they told me about their lives before coming to America, I wrote their stories verbatim as much as possible but put in connecting words necessary to make the meaning clear.

The results of this exercise were varied. One student told me almost more than I wanted to know about her loom manufacturing business before the Communists took it over. She was able to tell her story with little questioning and prompting from me. One student brought a resume neatly written by a daughter at home that he could read to me, but found it very difficult to elaborate on. The other man told his story quite well. Here's part.....

I Escaped from POW Camp

In November 10th, 1981, the day I had one of the most anxious moments of my life. Before on 10th two day, every meal, I saved some salt water and a little food and I concealed them in my old bag. My friend Nguyen Van Binh pretended to have malaria before me two days. I pretended to have diarrhea and went to toilet next to our home many times a day. The toilet next to our home but inside camp's wire fencing and had a sewer through under a wire fencing. Long times, my friend Binh and I took note of this sewer. It's 5 o'clock a.m. It's raining. Everybody went to out work. My friend and I were at home because we were sick. It's still raining and darkening. We came to toilet and sneaked in the sewer. We got out and ran to near mountain. We ran through the day. We maked an effort to get very far from POW camp. At night we found the cavern and rested. We were very tired. After six day, we maked sure to be far from a dangerous area. We rested two days in a cavern and found some foods. We looked for the bird's eggs, the tree's roots, vegetable in the mountain, anythings maybe eat. After that, we continued go to in the mountain, we looked at the sunrises. We saw many wild beasts but excepted the tigers and wild elephants. The both we were afraid, Communists could retake us and wild beasts were very dangerous.

The third week, all of a sudden my friend Binh was diarrhea. After three day he was dead. I was very sad. I held my friend's body and wept bitterly, wept from vexation. I carried him in the cavern and covered him by stones. After two days I worked hardly, I saw my friend who was only stones heap. When the Vietnam republic, Nguyen Van Binh was the lieutenant colonel in army. We lived together 2 camps and 6 years and a half. I was very tired and afflicted but I thought, I had to contend with a difficulty by myself.

Collected by NORMA BENTSON
Tacoma Community House

Sokhom Sok's Life Story

Sokhom came to America from Cambodia, after spending five years in a refugee camp in Thailand. Sokhom was a farmer in Cambodia where he lived with his family. Sokhom lived in a house built on poles. The poles protected his house from the rainy season. During the rainy season the river next to his house would flood and he stayed indoors. When it wasn't rainy Sokhom would work on the farm. On his farm they raised cows, pigs, fish, and rice. He had a dog, a cat, chickens, and a pig as pets. The people of his village played games - one of which was soccer. Sokhom left from Cambodia in 1979, when the Communists came to his house and killed his family. Sokhom escaped by running into the barn. Sokhom left with his friends to go to Thailand. Sokhom went to a refugee camp where he spent five years of his life. While Sokhom was at the camp he met his wife and they got married. Sokhom came to America in 1983. Sokhom now has three children, two boys and one girl. He has one-year-old twins (a boy and a girl), and a six-year-old son. Sokhom was born in December of 1949 and he is 37 years old.

Sokhom lives in Tacoma and he really likes it here.

JEFF HILTON
Tacoma Community House

From the Mountains...

As told to PATRICIA TEMPLETON by CHORN ORN SAECHO

After a dangerous four-year trek that began in the jungles of Laos, Choy Saecho came to the U.S. to begin a new life. From the first day of high school, what he found surprised him.

The ringing of the bell at the end of my first class in an American high school gave me my first big jolt of culture shock. All the students picked up their books and ran out of the room. I sat at my desk in confusion, wondering where everyone had gone; then I realized something must be wrong. Maybe there was a fire! So I picked up my books and ran, too.

Entering the crowded hallway only added to my confusion. No one was reacting with alarm. In fact, a boy and girl were walking hand-and-hand. Another couple was kissing. They must have known I could see them. Weren't they embarrassed?

Then I noticed a teacher walking down the hall. Everyone was ignoring her; no one bowed to her or stopped to let her pass. I couldn't believe how disrespectful those students were. They didn't even look like students; none were wearing uniforms. I suddenly realized I was going to have to learn a lot more English to feel at home in an American high school.

A year later, my English has improved and I've become accustomed to those things that shocked me so much during my first weeks of school here. But when I think how my life has changed in the past few years, I'm amazed.

Until I was 10 years old, I expected that I would live my life the way my family had lived for generations, growing rice in the isolated mountains of Laos. My family is Mien, a tribal people that originally came from southern China, and our way of life had changed little for more than a thousand years.

Sometimes when my American classmates laugh at me because I have made a mistake in English or because I don't know how to play American sports, I wonder how they would cope with life in my country. I think if an American came to live in my village in Laos, he would die unless we helped him survive.

First it would be difficult even to get to my village, which was more than a day's walk through rugged mountains from the nearest road. My village had no stores or banks or post offices, no electricity, telephones, or running water.

...to the Suburbs

The houses of the 35 families who lived there and the pens for our livestock were the only buildings, and we had built them ourselves. My mother and my sisters made all our clothes. Everything we ate we grew or raised ourselves. We got up before dawn to walk for an hour to the fields, where we grew rice and corn and had gardens of papayas, oranges, bananas, squash, tomatoes, and onions.

Building our own houses, making our own clothes, and growing and raising our own food was a lot of work, and the larger the family the more workers there were. I have 10 brothers and sisters. We were all expected to help take care of the animals, work in the fields and look after our younger siblings.

Formal education was not a top priority in our lives. For many years there was simply no school in our tiny village. Even if there had been, many of the children wouldn't have been able to attend, because they were needed to work in the fields. But the year I was 6, the Lao government decided to send a teacher to our remote mountain and my father decided that he didn't need me to work in the fields, so I was able to go to school.

There were three grades, but only one room and one teacher. Our school had no electricity, no library, and no cafeteria. We sat on benches - girls on one side of the room and boys on the other - and wrote on slates with chalk. My mother knew how to make paper from bamboo, but it had to be saved for special occasions, not wasted every day at school.

Since Mien, our native dialect, has no written language, we studied in Lao. The teacher wrote the day's lessons on the chalkboard. We copied them on our slates, then repeated them over and over until we could recite them in front of the class. Failure to learn a lesson earned us a switching from the teacher, but I had another reason to study hard. At night, after I did my chores, I taught my brothers and sisters who had to work in the fields how to read and write.

My education came to an abrupt halt in 1975, when the political upheaval and warfare that had encompassed so much of Southeast Asia for years finally reached even our isolated mountain. The royal Lao government fell to the Communist Pathet Lao, which brought an almost immediate change to our lives. Soon after the takeover, representatives from the new government came to our village to explain that things would be different now.

Before 1975 we had always worked hard, but the things that we grew, raised, or made were our own. Now, the soldiers explained, everything that we owned would belong to the state. The soldiers went through our house and made a list of everything we had. Every pot and pan, every knife, every horse, every pig, every chicken was listed in their notebooks. If we wanted to kill or sell an animal, we first had to get the permission of the Communist officials.

If the soldiers came back to our village and discovered that we had eaten one of our animals without their permission, we would be sent to "seminars" in another part of the country. The purpose of the seminars was to educate people in the Communist way of life, but few returned from them.

Instead of letting each family continue to work its own fields, the Communists divided our village into groups that worked the fields together. The rice we grew didn't belong to us; it belonged to the government, and the authorities decided how much our family would receive.

Our money, which we had earned from selling livestock to townspeople, was declared worthless. The school was closed. They closed the stores in the nearest town, where we had bought fabric, salt, and pans; the storekeepers were sent to work in the fields.

Throughout the year the conditions grew worse. Twice my older brothers had to hide in the woods to escape being taken as soldiers. Rumors began to reach us of mass killings in other villages.

Our village headman called a meeting of the entire village to discuss what we should do. Mien people have always believed that God uses nature to send us signs of the future. One man said he had seen a star running across the sky toward Thailand. Then we remembered that a few months earlier a large flock of birds that we had never seen before had flown over our village, also in the direction of Thailand. Clearly God was sending us a sign, and so we decided to follow the stars and the birds to freedom.

For the next three days, everyone in the village was tense as we prepared to leave. We packed bundles of clothes, blankets, and pots and hid them in the forest. My mother and sisters prepared the food for our journey - hollow lengths of bamboo filled with rice and water, then cooked. As soon as the food was finished, we hid it in the forest, too. Even though we were all preparing to leave, we had to give the impression that life was going on as usual, for if the Communists came and saw us getting ready to escape, we would all be killed.

Finally the preparations were completed, and on June 6, 1975, at 10 o'clock at night, the 350 people in our village entered the forest to begin the long trek to what we hoped would be freedom in Thailand.

For 15 days and nights we walked through the mountains. Three of my younger brothers and sisters and my niece and nephew were too small to walk, so my parents, my older brothers and sisters, and I carried them on our backs. We also carried our clothes, blankets, and pots. Our family was lucky because we had two horses to carry our food. My father had the heaviest load, because he also carried a bag of silver that we had saved over many years, which we hoped to use to start our new life in Thailand.

There were no roads for us to walk on. We followed overgrown trails that had been in existence for generations. Walking was difficult. The mountains were steep, and it rained almost every day; our legs were swollen from leeches, our loads were heavy, and we never dared stop for more than three hours at a time. We were tired, hungry, and thirsty, and we were in constant fear that the soldiers would find us and shoot us all. The young children and the horses had to be muzzled so that the Communists would not hear them if they cried. One night we heard gunshots, and soon afterward two young boys caught up with us to tell us that the Communists had discovered their entire village trying to escape. They were the only survivors from that village.

At last we made it to the Mekong River, the border with Thailand. It was the rainy season and the river was swollen and treacherous, but crossing it was the only way to reach freedom. We built a raft and spent all day going back and forth across the wide river, carrying 10 people at a crossing.

Finally we were all safe on Thai soil. We hoped that we would be able to find villages of Mien people in the mountains of Thailand and resume the happy, peaceful life we had led before the Communist takeover of Laos.

But that was not to be. As soon as we had all made it across the river, we were captured by Thai soldiers. My father cried as they stole our horses and all our silver and took us to a refugee camp.

We were among the first refugees to escape to Thailand. Later, after thousands of people had crossed the border seeking refuge, large camps were established and run by the United Nations. But at the time of our escape, the camps were small and run by the Thai government. Thai officials there told us the country did not want us and said that we would soon be sent back to Laos.

Going back to Laos meant we would almost certainly be killed, so my parents decided to risk and escape from the camp. We sneaked past the guards one night and then made our way through the mountains to a village of Mien people who were willing to take us in.

There were no Communists in Thailand, but life there was not easy. For two years there was a drought and the rice would not grow, so we ate only corn. We had no money to buy livestock or other food. We had no fields of our own, so we worked picking corn in other people's fields for less than a dollar a day, barely enough money for our large family to survive on. And we lived always in fear that the Thai authorities would discover we were in the country illegally and would send us back to Laos.

We lived that way for four years, with a constant ache in our stomachs - the ache of hunger and the ache of fear. Then we began to hear from friends and relatives who had escaped from Laos after us and had gone to America. Life in America was good, they said. The American government would give you money until you could find a job and the American people were kind. The language was difficult and some American ways were strange, but there was plenty of food and plenty of jobs to be had.

We had never thought of going to America before, but now my parents decided that maybe this would at last be our opportunity to find freedom and security. We went back to the refugee camp, which was now run by the United Nations, and were interviewed by officials from the American embassy. After telling them our story, we received permission to go to America. We then lived in the camp for a year, completing paperwork and studying English and American culture before we finally left for Seattle.

Our sponsors, from a Methodist church in Seattle, met us at the airport and took us to our new home. Because my family is so large, we were given two apartments together in the same complex. Our sponsors also helped us get our Social Security cards and took us to the welfare office, to the doctor, and to school for enrollment. My parents and older brothers and sisters study English at a nearby community college.

The U.S. government gives financial assistance to all refugees for 18 months, so that they will have time to adjust to America and learn enough English to get a job. My family's biggest worry is how we will support ourselves when the 18 months are up in June. Even if we all work, supporting 16 people is not going to be easy. Our lives in Laos did little to prepare us for the American job market.

It must be hard for an American kid to imagine how different everything here is to us. Even everyday things like carpeting on the floor were a novelty to us at first. The differences in our lives here are sometimes overwhelming. I had never watched television until I was 12 years old. Now I'm learning to program computers.

Our life in Laos was very simple. We ate what we grew, we wore what we made, we lived in what we built. Before the Communists took over, there was no government intrusion in our lives. America is so different. We can't be self-sufficient here. And there are so many laws - laws about work, laws about school, laws about fishing, even laws about where you can bury your relatives.

American teenagers are very different from teenagers in Laos, too. They seem much older. They don't seem to have as much respect for their teachers, parents, and grandparents. Sometimes I think they don't realize how lucky they are to be living in America and to have all they have.

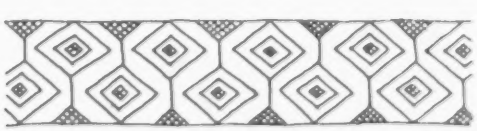
People often ask me now if I am homesick for my country. I am, of course. On a clear day in Seattle, when I can see the mountains on the horizon, I miss the mountains of Laos. I miss the peaceful life I had there before the soldiers came. I miss my friends. I miss hunting birds and fishing. I miss my house and the animals we raised. Most of all I miss the clean air, the open space.

Although we gave up all those things to come to America and we have many problems here, I do not want to go back to Laos. I do hope, though, that my old country will someday know peace, I hope my new country, America, will never know war. And I hope that my family will never again experience hunger or the loss of freedom.

Patricia Templeton is a reporter for the Nashville Banner in Nashville, Tennessee. After serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand, Templeton worked as a CO supervisor in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand, where she met the Saecho family. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia with a degree in journalism.

Choy Orn Saecho is an 18-year-old, 12th grade student at Highline High School in Des Moines, Washington. He came to the U.S. in 1983.

From Passage, Volume 1, Number 3, Winter 1985



Culture Shock

Culture is the knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws and customs of a society. Culture includes the things that we can see - the way people dress, the food that they eat, the customs and festivals that they have. But culture also includes things that we can't see - the values that people have, the way that they react to the world, and the way that they think about life.

When someone goes to live in another culture, he usually has some problems in adjusting to the new culture. Psychologists call this "culture shock."

Culture shock usually starts 3 to 6 months after a person arrives in the new culture. It often lasts several months.

Examples of culture shock:

1. Complaining a lot about the new culture.

2. Wanting to be together with only people who speak your language.

3. Not wanting to eat the food, speak the language or be with people from the new culture.

4. Feeling very depressed or irritable.

5. Feeling that you are not a good person or that something is wrong with you.

6. Feeling paranoid - that is, feeling that other people are all bad, don't like you, or want to hurt you.

Culture shock is a little different for each person. It begins at different times and can last a few months or a longer time. But EVERYBODY who goes to live in another culture has culture shock at some time. Sometimes it is very bad, but sometimes people don't even know when they have culture shock.

Here are some things that can help if you or your family and friends are going through culture shock:

1. Try to understand the reasons for culture shock. Know that it is normal to feel culture shock. Watch for the symptoms.

2. Most people are uncomfortable when they have to change. Changing cultures is a BIG change. Understand that you are growing as a person because of this experience.

3. Be kind to yourself. Let yourself take a little "vacation" from the new culture. Don't force yourself to do things if you don't want to.

4. Take a "vacation" from the new language. Read books, see movies, talk to people in your own language.

5. Find people from your culture or language group who have already lived in the new country for some time and who have already adjusted. Talk to them about the new culture.

6. If you are really depressed and unhappy, GET HELP. Go to a social worker, counselor, church or doctor.

MICHELE MOLINAIRE
Griffin College, 1983

Conflict Avoidance

"The person holding the land next to my grandmother's garden cut down a tree to sell. It was recognized by all that the other party had trespassed and cut down one of my grandmother's trees. I asked her what she would do. She equivocated and said it was only one tree, and it wasn't worth the effort to make an issue. A few days passed and my grandmother and her brother surveyed the situation. They had a little chat with the family involved who admitted they had cut the tree, but argued the tree was on their property. Nothing further was done. I told my family elders that unless they made an issue of the theft, the neighbor would repeat the act. Two months later he did. But again no direct action was taken... My cousin and her mother spoke strongly about the evil nature of the neighbor but never said a direct word to him. My cousin, in front of her elders, spoke up bravely and said she would go to the District Officer and even to court as a last resort. She had no intention of doing any one of these things... When the time came to turn these brave and angry words into action, a hasty retreat ensued." (Klausner: 51)

The above anecdote is a striking example of the attitude toward conflict in traditional Lao culture. Note the extent to which the injured party will go so as not to antagonize the other party. This is not cowardice but an example of the paramount importance which Lao culture places on maintaining social harmony and avoiding conflict.

Traditional Lao culture is characterized by harmonious social relationships with a corresponding avoidance of anger, criticism, and, above all, conflict. This avoidance stems from many factors: a community based on mutual assistance and cooperation, the belief in spirits, and the Buddhist notion of harmony. Each of these individually inhibits the development of conflict. Collectively, they reduce conflict to a rare but extremely serious occurrence.

Traditional Lao villages depend upon the willing cooperation of each villager to complete the tasks necessary for the village's well-being. Many activities are cooperative: harvesting, digging wells, constructing and maintaining irrigation systems, and building temples, schools, and homes. Conflict would seriously rend the fabric that allows the village to successfully carry out these activities.

Beyond the practical economic benefit derived from a cooperative village, conflict in traditional Lao society is considered abhorrent to the ubiquitous spirits that populate the land. Human conflict and anger unleash similar and less predictable behavior by the spirits. When the spirits become angry, they vent their rage in natural calamities such as drought, floods, or famine, and this wrath is visited upon offenders and innocents alike. Thus, when conflict exists, the village is endangered, and it is incumbent upon the entire village to avoid conflict or, if it occurs, to resolve it expeditiously.

In addition to honoring the ever-present spirits, the Lao are Buddhists. A basic tenet of Buddhist philosophy is harmony. Buddhism stresses harmony between man and nature and between man and man. Harmony is sought for its own merit. Indeed, one of the four aspects depicted on the Bayon, the four-headed statue of the Khmer, a sister culture to the Lao, is harmony.

Though open conflict is carefully avoided and surface harmony is just as carefully maintained, the Lao have developed many ways of expressing displeasure without displaying anger or other anti-social emotions. While maintaining an apparently harmonious and smiling manner toward the cause of one's anger, one can use various techniques to express the feeling indirectly, such as sarcasm, avoiding contact, or offering various excuses for delaying assistance.

One common method unknown in the West is prachot. For example, let us say that Thongkham feels that his neighbor Houmphanh has become haughty recently. Within earshot of Houmphanh, Thongkham will revile his own son, "Why are you acting so stuck-up lately? Do you think that you are better than everyone else?" Though the criticism is seemingly directed at Thongkham's son, everyone understands that the criticism is directed at Houmphanh. Not only is this a satisfying form of venting one's rage, but, more importantly, it preserves social harmony without loss of face.

Lao refugees resettling in America must learn about different styles of indicating displeasure and anger. Prachot and other subtle methods of expressing these feelings have been polished to a fine art in Lao culture, but most of these methods would be found to be ineffective in America. Prachot, specifically, would simply not be understood by Americans. The concern for the preservation of social harmony is not highly valued in America; in fact, conflict is even considered to have a purifying effect. Americans value direct and honest communication. The Lao style of expressing discontent would not be thought of as subtle, but as devious.

After an American foreman swore at a Lao fruitpicker, his entire Lao workforce quit right then and there in protest. That foreman may never hire a refugee again. The "hotheaded" anger typical of Americans, who readily accept it and forgive it, is unknown to the Lao. Similar behavior in the Lao context would be considered madness.

In traditional Lao society the avoidance of conflict is of critical importance to the effective functioning of the village. It is so basic as to go unquestioned. The attitudes towards conflict, shared to varying degrees by other Indochinese cultures, have caused problems in the U.S. Southeast Asian refugees have been victimized by thieves who know that the crimes will go unreported. Thieves have been known to walk into Lao households and cart away valuables in full view of the owners... It is important for Lao refugees to reconcile the American and Lao perspectives on conflict in order to make the adjustments in attitude and behavior that may be necessary. They will have to learn how to deal with Americans on their own ground - which is now the refugees' ground as well. To do this, the refugees must be made aware of the differences in American and Lao views on conflict and must be trained to deal with conflict situations in an American context.

STEVEN EPSTEIN
from Passage

Vietnam's Traditional Holidays

Traditionally in many countries in the world, and in Vietnam, there are many holidays celebrated as religious anniversaries, or in commemoration of some extraordinary event, or to honor a distinguished person or for reasons of public policy.

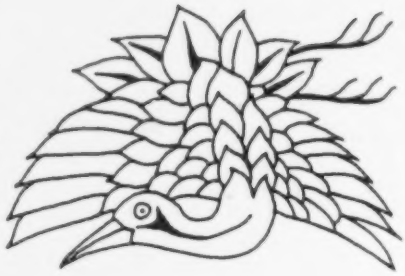
Vietnam was dominated for one thousand years by China and colonized almost for one hundred years by the French. Consequently, Vietnamese have still applied and used the lunar calendar as well as the solar calendar for their daily activities and their holidays. That's why we have had two kinds of annual holidays.

Applying the lunar calendar we have "TET NGUYEN-DAN" (New Year Festival) celebrated on the first day of the first lunar month. Government offices, schools, business offices, supermarkets, public markets and grocer's shops are closed for three days. There is absolute cessation of work. Adults in full uniform and children are dressed in their new clothes. These families go to church if they are Christians. The others go to Pagodas or Temples if they are Buddhists or other religions. They pray in order to obtain success, happiness, blessedness for the whole of the year. After that we usually go over to see our grandparents, our uncles, our aunts, and our neighbors in order to wish them a Happy New Year and a long life. We eat and drink special foods for lunch and dinner. We play cards, fire firecrackers, and watch Chinese Dragon Dance. The most important thing during three days is not to mention bad omens or to speak ill or evil of someone. We must abstain from doing something awful or wrong. Avoid quarrelling with others or reviling, or using bad language with the children even though they make big mistakes. Avoid sweeping the house during the three to seven days so you will not lose money or be bankrupt. In other words, we absolutely must do good activities and be on our best behavior.

Also we have "TET NHI-DONG or TET TRUNG THU" (mid-Autumn) celebrated on the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar moon. This holiday was organized for the children. Schools close for one day. When night comes, under the light of the full moon in the sky, children dress in their clean clothes, hold a lantern in hand , and walk outside singing beautiful children's songs. They dance or play "Hide and Seek" until midnight. When they come back home they eat a special cake named "BANH TRUNG THU" with their parents. They are completely happy and joyous. We as fathers and mothers are also extremely happy and receive great enjoyment from their activities. In Vietnam we also have applied the solar calendar to commemorate Christmas (called LE GIANG SINH) and New Year (called TET TAY). These are organized the same way and same date as in America and in Europe. School and Government administrations are closed for one day. The six holidays that I tell about in this story were the principal and legal holidays in my country. They are unchangeable even though the political regimes do change.

CHAU PHAM
Barton School, Spokane

As If A Bird: to my mother



Mother, as if a bird, I am flying far
Seeking a new home, a new life
Away from my old home and the sweet land
To find a place of good fellowship
To live without fear, without distress
    The farther I go, the more I miss
    Our green bamboo trees
    Our thatched roofs, our bamboo doors
    Our flocks of chickens at sunset
    Calling one another to back pens
    Our country girls in black pants
    Carrying baskets of rice
Mother, I am flying away
As if a bird going far with weary wings
Alone day and night
Alone in the sun, alone in the rain
Building a nest in the far-reaching land
    Lonely I am when
    Thinking of you
    Thinking of the new land
    Where I grew up amid the eventful time
    Sorrowful, leaving you behind
    Lying in the grave underground.

By Pham Loc, a Vietnamese refugee now ressetled in the U.S., who was an assistant teacher at the Philippine Refugee Processing Center; from Passage.

Xiang Meang's Last Trick

Xiang Meang was a wise and crafty man who lived in Laos a long time ago. The people of Laos liked him, but the king didn't. Xiang Meang was always playing tricks on the king and telling jokes about the king, so the king hated him.

One day the king took many soldiers to catch Xiang Meang. He wanted to kill the trickster. Xiang Meang knew what the king wanted to do, but he didn't run away. He let the soldiers catch him. The king said, "Tie Xiang Meang to that big tree beside the river." Then the king and the soldiers went away, leaving Xiang Meang tied to the tree.

Some boats came down the river. The people on the boats came to sell things. Xiang Meang called out to the people, "Who wants to be king?" The people were surprised, but one man came up to Xiang Meang and said, "I want to be king." "Well then," said Xiang Meang, "untie me. I don't really want to be king. So if you take my place here, you can be king." The man untied Xiang Meang, and then the trickster tied the man to the tree.

In the morning, the king came back with the soldiers. He was in such a hurry to kill Xiang Meang, that he didn't look at the man tied to the tree. He just said to the soldiers, "Cut down the tree." The soldiers cut the tree and it fell into the river. The soldiers watched the tree floating down the river, and they saw that the man tied to the tree was not Xiang Meang. "Oh, look!" they cried, "We killed the wrong man. Xiang Meang got away!"

The king was very angry that Xiang Meang had escaped one more time. He decided that he would try again to kill Xiang Meang. He sent poisoned food to his enemy's house.

Xiang Meang knew that the food was poisoned. He told his wife, "If I die, don't cry. I'm not going to be with you anymore." He ate the food and put on his glasses and read a book. His wife listened to what he said. After he died, she left him sitting there, reading a book, and she didn't cry.

The king told the soldiers to go visit Xiang Meang. The soldiers went to his house and looked through the window. They ran back to tell the king, "Xiang Meang isn't dead. He's sitting there, wearing his glasses and reading a book. His wife isn't crying. Everything is O.K. at his house."

The king was enraged. "Why didn't he die? I sent poisoned food! What went wrong? Give me some of that food!" So the king tried some of the same food he sent to Xiang Meang. Because the food really was poisoned, of course the king died too.

When the king died, his wife began to cry and wail. When Meang's wife heard the king's wife was crying, she knew that the king was dead. Xiang Meang had tricked the king for the last time. Then Xiang Meang's wife cried too.

Xiang Meang's day is April 1. Everybody plays tricks on that day. We like to trick each other and make each other laugh, but no one plays the same tricks Xiang Meang did!

As told to ANITA BELL
by NY SYLAROTH
Tacoma Community House

The Pol Pot Regime

The Khmer Rouge communist regime is a bad leader in Kampuchea. There was frighteningly little food and they made people do jobs every day and night with no rest time. During the war, a majority of people died by not having enough food and by being sick with no medicine. After that they made the plan that they kill all of the people who had been a soldier in the Kampuchea Republic who worked with Americans, they killed their children too. They killed anyone who was a foreign student or professional, teachers and other people who had a job in the Kampuchea Republic, they killed all of the family. This is bad leader in Kampuchea that killed all the people that total more than 3 million people. All that died were good people such as teachers, soldiers, doctors, professionals, heads of Buddhism, monks and the people who had jobs before Communists. I don't want to see and hear about this regime. Because of this regime I never have seen in my life "The Killing Fields" film on Pol Pot. This Communist is the violent regime that killed the people and caused the famine. They did not give enough food, often only meals two times in one day, sometimes only a half spoon of rice. Please believe that this regime is the bad one in the world. The world has never seen like that before. So it will be told in the history of Kampuchea by anyone that survived the killing fields of Pol Pot.

HIM SAMOEUN
Tacoma Community House Student

When he very hungry he go to pick coconut for eat but the khmer rouge catch him to tie and kick, hit him because he is hungry he cannot eat starve.

Shermarke of Ethiopia

A narrow strip of dull orange, struggling between the dark clouds in what is left of the dying sun far in the horizon. The western sky is overcast with dark grey and forboding clouds. The chilly dusty wind is insistently whispering in an ugly and mournful pitch. The atmosphere is laden with a saddening melancholy of discontent and uncertainty. And Dikhil refugee village, as if aware of the moment, is silently gazing into the distance of the western plains. Indifferent, inanimate and unfeeling as it is. But emptiness, sorrow and a sharp awareness of futility are in the air. Shermarke had just died.

Who is Shermarke? Who knows and who cares? He is just a refugee out of many. He was sick, he went to the hospital, he died. Finished! A couple of nose sniffs from those soft at heart, a few "Oh that fellow", "Ah, that guy" from thoe who recognised him and thought these appropriate words to be spoken, and then he'll just be a word. And after a couple of months, nothing. Not even a memory, Shermarke, who ate rice, who wore a white shirt, who spoke six languages, who laughed, sneezed, cursed and stumbled over an outgrowth of rock, will be earth, eternal as time.

I first met Shermarke some two months ago. He came to the place where I'm living to visit Solomon. Since then I've seen him four or five times. I really don't know him and never cared to. It's not his person, but the reality of death in his death that made me think about him. He was a man and just like any man he was his own universe. With his dreams, and ideals, his plans and goals, his strengths and weaknesses, his happiness and sorrows, his beauty and ugliness, fighting his own battles, winning and losing. But now where are all these passions? Where is his honour and shame, his hunger or satisfaction? In us, the living? But we don't know his pains, loves, hates, his depths, his likes. Just Shermarke, a refugee. And now he is just a lump of meat, bones and hair, wrapped up with a cheap sheet and waiting for the morning to be thrown into the grave and done with. A burden for those who are waiting in his tent with his body. What did he feel when he knew that he was going to die, when he felt that death was meeting him half-way through? When he found himself alone with no one to lean on, no one to comfort him? His beloved and dear ones all far away, and no one to pacify him and cry over him in his last agony?...Who knows? Only he knew he is no more. Tomorrow he will be just dust to dust...a was...a had been...and life will go on...card...resettlement, ration, Ali Malow (Former head of the Government implementing agency for refugees), atomic bomb, time goes on and Shermarke remains dead.

Yesterday he went to the hospital, walking, to seek medical help for his ulcer. They gave him an injection and he came back to his tent. Today in the morning his hands were paralysed and he was carried to the hospital and got hospitalised. In the afternoon he got worse, and he died at six...God rest your soul, Shermarke, if there is a god. And wherever you are don't forget that the world is nothing but life and death and you are one more.

ABERA WOLDU
Ethiopian refugee

From Refugees (August 1985, Number 20), UNHCR, Geneva, Switzerland.

About the Neighbors

I live in W. Sharp Street. I live in this house almost 1 1/2 years now. According to where I live, the neighbors are very nice to me and my family. I knew some of the neighbors quite well. They usually come over and have a cup of tea or coffee when I have spare time. And I live one block from my rent lord. I go to her house and she comes over a lot. Her name is Tina. She has 2 daughters and 2 sons. Tina and her family are my best and favorite neighbors.

MUI TRAN
Country Home School, Spokane

Good Neighbors

My wife Hoa and I like neighbors because they are gentleman and ladies. Their children come to my house and talk with my grandchildren and play games with the ball. Sometimes they ride bicycles on the street. Sometimes they rollerskate at the Friendship Park. Sometimes they fly kites. Sometimes they play on slides and swings and other things.

My neighbors talk to me, they cut my grass. My neighbors work day times, I work night time so we see each other Saturday and Sunday. Winter time my neighbors help push my car out of the snow.

I help them push their car. I want to speak English better at my job at Safeway store, so people can understand what I say to them.

TICH NGUYEN
Country Homes School

Rich Woman, Poor Woman

I am a woman.
I am a woman.

I am a woman born of a woman whose man owned a factory.
I am a woman born of a woman whose man labored in a factory.

I am a woman whose man wore silk suits, who constantly watched his weight.
I am a woman whose man wore tattered clothing, whose heart was constantly strangled by hunger.

I am a woman who watched two babies grow into beautiful children.
I am a woman who watched two babies die because there was no milk.

I am a woman who watched twins grow into popular college students with summers abroad.
I am a woman who watched three children grow, but with bellies stretched from no food.

But then there was a man;
But then there was a man;

And he talked about the peasants getting richer by my family getting poorer.
And he told me of days that would be better, and he made the days better.

We had to eat rice.
We had rice.

We had to eat beans!
We had beans.

My children were no longer given summer visas to Europe.
My children no longer cried themselves to sleep.

And I felt like a peasant.
And I felt like a woman.

A peasant with a dull, hard, unexciting life.
Like a woman with a life that sometimes allowed a song.

And I saw a man.
And I saw a man.

And together we began to plot with the hope of the return of freedom.
I saw his heart begin to beat with hope of freedom, at last.

Someday, the return to freedom.
Someday freedom.

And then,
But then,

One day,
One day,

There were planes overhead and guns firing close by.
There were planes overhead and guns firing in the distance.

And the guns moved farther away.
But the guns moved closer and closer.

And then they announced that freedom had been restored!
And then they came, young boys really.

They came into my home with my man.
They came and found my man.

These men whose money was almost gone--
They found the men whose lives were almost their own

We all had drinks to celebrate.
And they shot them all.

The most wonderful martinis.
They shot my man.

And then they asked us to dance.
And then they came for me.

Me.
For me, the woman.

And my sisters.
For my sisters.

And then they took us,
Then they took us,

They took us to dinner at a private club.
They stripped from us our dignity.

And they treated us to beef.
And then they raped us.

It was one course after another.
One after another they came after us.

We nearly burst we were so full.
Lunging, plunging--sisters bleeding, sisters dying.

It was magnificent to be free again!
It was hardly a relief to survive.

The beans have almost disappeared now.
The beans have disappeared.

The rice--I've replaced it with chicken or steak.
The rice, I cannot find it.

And the parties continue night after night to make up for all the time wasted.
And my silent tears are joined once more by the midnight cries of my children.

And I feel like a woman again.
They say, I am a woman.

By a working-class Chilean woman in 1973.

Whose Country Is This, Anyway?

Recently, the President of the United States said: "We have respected every other religion. They're free to practice in our country..."

What does he mean, "other religion"? And what does he mean when he says "our country"? Is it possible that our President believes that, through some divine guidance, the United States of America belongs to a particular group of people who practice a particular kind of religion?

I hope that is not the case. I was brought up to believe that this country belongs to all of its citizens: Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, atheists, etc. I know of no group that has the prerogative of owning this country, and then sharing parts of it with various minorities.

How strange it is that we who are descendents of immigrants can so quickly come to the belief that the country belongs to "us" and that it is our privilege to share or not to share "our" country with various latecomers. Except for those illegal aliens who are, actually, our "guests" - about whom we must make some very painful decisions - we are all part of the incredible household of this country, with no person or group able to claim special ownership. Unless I have misunderstood the President, he needs to re-examine that phrase in our Pledge of Allegiance, "one nation, under God, indivisible..."

REVEREND DAVID BRAUN
Mason United Methodist Church,
Tacoma

Folk Remedies

Arriving for her regular Tuesday class, one TCH tutor was alarmed to observe her new friend lying on the bed being pummeled furiously by her mother-in-law. Marci was shocked to see Phalla covered with a deep red rash on her arms and chest. After the rigorous activity subsided both women explained to Marci that Phalla was suffering from headaches and as neither woman seemed concerned, the English lesson commenced.

The story reminded me of an incident several years ago in a class at Tacoma Community House. A Vietnamese woman fainted in class and three or four men in the class immediately fell to work pounding her head and shoulders, pinching the top of her nose and each temple. The startled teacher finally managed to interrupt the procedure and place the unconscious woman on a couch, putting her feet up and covering her with a coat. We left her alone while someone called her doctor. We were amazed to observe that the students were as appalled by our behavior as we had been of theirs. They felt it was vital that her spirit be roused and turned back toward this world. How could we stand by quietly, allowing her to slip away from us?

LUCINDA WINGARD

Coining: A Southeast Asian Medical Treatment

Treatment by use of friction is often referred to as "coining." It is an age-old treatment in Cambodia and is a legitimate part of the practice of Oriental and traditional medicine. To some extent, it can be compared to the use of therapeutic massage here in the West.

In Cambodia, people call a group of common symptoms or disorders by the name of "Khal Chab." These include dizziness, blurred vision, cold extremities, nausea, stomach cramp, headache, difficulty sleeping, some types of fainting and some kinds of joint or muscle pain. There is a general understanding that these are caused by the following:

1. overwork and exhaustion
2. overexposure to the sun or excessive heat (this causes fainting spells, cramps and dizziness)
3. lack of proper ventilation e.g. sitting in a smoke filled room or behind a bus in city traffic
4. anxiety, sudden fright or emotional shock
5. poor diet
6. poor circulation due to old age (this is thought to produce muscle and joint pain

In order to appreciate the concept of "coining," it is necessary to understand that Eastern medicine is based largely on the idea that health can be achieved only through harmony of the body, mind and environment. Illness must be considered to be caused by more than just biological factors and treatment must therefore include more than biological remedies.

"Coining" is helpful in treating Khal Chab because it promotes increased blood and lymphatic circulation to the whole body. It works on principles similar to massage. Attention is given to the veins of the body which return the blood to the heart and in that way promote normal flow to the brain and the extremities.

This causes the symptoms of dizziness, blurred vision and cold extremities to be relieved quite quickly. The patient experiences a clear head and sense of well-being. This sense of well-being, however, will be short lived if the cause of the "Khal Chab" is not attended to.

What about the use of "coining" with other illnesses that are not "Khal Chab?" Can coining cure cancer or appendicitis? The answer is definitely, no! However, "coining" can alleviate many of the symptoms that are due to serious illness and this is sometimes an area of concern. What if a child has appendicitis and is experiencing stomach cramps? Coining might relieve the symptoms and delay the diagnosis of a serious condition. Therefore, it must be remembered that if "coining" is being used and symptoms keep reoccurring with the same intensity, then it is time to consult with a physician.

I feel that "coining" is a safe, inexpenisive way for people to receive relief from symptoms that often go untreated in cosmopolitan systems of medical care. Symptom relief has the advantage of decreasing the patient's anxiety, and in that way promotes a return to harmony, providing of course that the cause of the symptoms are also carefully attended to. In a culture that is accustomed to intense consideration of cause and effect, this is rarely a problem.

The disadvantages of "coining" are that it is painful, especially for those who do not use it frequently. The danger of masking symptoms is also always present and should always be a consideration.

Originally written in Khmer by TONN ROS and translated and summarized in English by THEANVY KUOCH and MARY SCULLY. From Summer 1983, Issue #1, Khmer-American Health newsletter.

Mountain Living

There are many animals in the mountains. In Cambodia there are tigers, snakes, black bear. No people are living in the mountains. The mountains are too high and too far from the store.

In Laos, Mien and Hmong people live in the mountains. They are not very high. In two days we can get to a store. That's very far. Sometimes, two times a year we go to the store. But only to buy clothes, not food.

In the valley there are chickens, pigs, sheep, birds, fish, cows, and everything.

Collected by JENNY SPRINGER
Mt. Virgin Parish

Birthdays

Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! That sound was very strange for me the first time I participated in my nephew's birthday party. I asked myself why they celebrated his birthday instead of the memorial anniversary of the death. Why did they pay attention to the birthday? I was very surprised, and I couldn't believe that in this country the birthday is more important and greater fun than the day of the death.

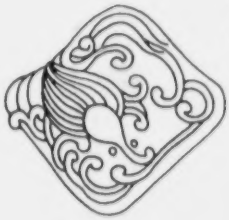
Following Vietnamese customs we have usually celebrated the anniversary of a death instead of a birthday. By filial piety and loyalty, the pious sons or grandsons must show respect for their parents or grandparents. They always kept in their mind the dying day of the ancestors in order to celebrate the ancestor's memorial anniversary whether they are wealthy or poor.

However, most Vietnamese families celebrated the first birthday of their children and sometimes they celebrated the twelfth birthday with the purpose of having good health and great progress in school.

CHAU PHAM
Barton School, Spokane

Every Chinese baby is considered to be one year old at the time of his birth. Most birthdays are celebrated with the family. The mother always prepares special foods which include noodles and whole boiled eggs. The birthday person always has two eggs with his noodles, and the others just one egg with their noodles. After this is eaten, small cakes are served for dessert. When birthdays number 10, 20, 30 etc., we always have a party and invite some friends to celebrate with the family. There is a big dinner, a big cake, and many presents. After the guests have gone, the birthday person opens the gifts with the family. The next day, everyone is thanked for the presents, either by seeing the givers or by telephoning. We then wait for the next birthday to come!

SUH-LING OLSRUD
Barton School, Spokane



In Poland we do not celebrate birthdays as we do in the U.S.A. We celebrate our nameday as it appears on the Polish calendar. On the nameday, the hostess prepares a table with special food, including a torte. The guest bring flowers and gifts for the person whose nameday is being celebrated. The person is given many wine toasts. It is a time for gaiety, singing, dancing and playing games.

EWA KAWALA
Barton School, Spokane

The Heat of Hatred

The people are hungry. The sun is shining.
The women are working in the rice field.
The babies are crying for their mothers' milk.
The guards are standing with arms around guns.
The fields are hot with mud.
The people stoop to plant, backs to each other.
Their legs are tired from long hours
of standing in the field.
The tired workers' bodies are weak.
The empty stomachs go to work without
breakfast or lunch in the cold morning.
Their throats and lips are dry.

Sometimes the women beg the guards for water,
but their enemies say "No." In the mid-day
the guards want to have a little fun
with the women who work under the sun.
They call one to bring them a cup of water.
The women see water. They would do anything.
The guards give them the water,
but not the easy way.
They pour water on their own faces and tell
the women to lick it off. They make the women
lick their hands like dogs.
They would do anything. They even lick
their feet for drops of water. The ugly faces
do it every day.

The women's faces are hot, hard, crushed
from the sun.
Their faces feel like rough rocks from the desert
in the midst of nowhere.
Their eyes are sad with tears and fear.

Their eyes cry for the one day that
they will all be free from hatred, death, and
their enemies. For one day when they'll walk
together with friends and family. The day
when they'll laugh, cry, sing, and dance
together. Always. Forever. In their own land.

CHANN HENG, age 15

Originally published by the ESL program of Bellevue Public School District.

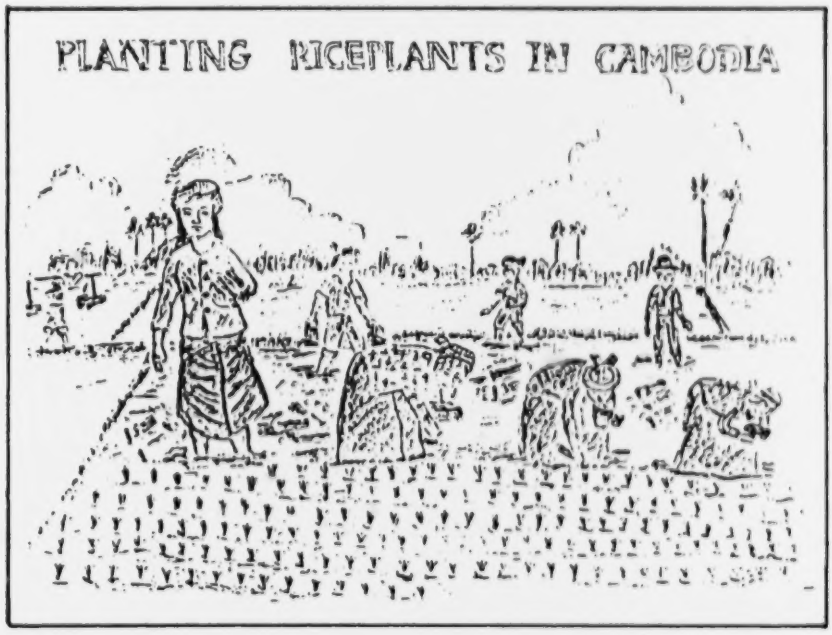
Asian Folktale

One day the monkey went down to a stream for a drink of water. He met a fish and they became good friends. Splashing and jumping in the water, they played all morning long. Suddenly the sky turned black and there was a storm. It rained very hard. Soon the stream began to flood. The monkey was able to reach up and grap a low-hanging branch of a tree. He pulled himself up. When he looked down into the stream, he saw his friend, the fish, struggling and swimming in the churning waters. He reached down and snatched his friend into the safety of the tree. As the waters swirled below, the monkey's newfound friend, the fish, died high up in the tree.

As told to MATTHEW LASZEWSKI

The Gallery

The following pictures were done by VORNG CHHOERN, formerly a Grays Harbor College ESL student. Thanks to LEE JOHNSON for passing them along to us.



CHHOEURN VORNG